SONGS of GLEN NA MONA

Brian O'Higgins

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Brian O'Higgins

STORMANSTOWN, GLASNEVIN, DUBLIN

Songs of
Glen na Mona

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BRIAN O'HIGGINS
STORMANSTOWN, GLASNEVIN, DUBLIN

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Foreword to Second Edition

BEFORE THIS SECOND EDITION of SONGS OF GLEN NA MONA *goes out to the public, a word of acknowledgment must be written of the many letters received from readers of the first edition in practically every part of the world.*

The first edition was issued in the summer of 1929. Six months later it was sold out, and this second impression called for in no uncertain or wavering tones.

The thanks of the publisher and printer are due to the writers of congratulatory letters received from Irish-born people in America, Canada, Newfoundland, Australia, Africa, India, France, Germany, Switzerland, Argentina, Spain, Scotland, Wales, and England, and for the warm words of thanks those exiles considered they should send in return for happy scenes recalled and olden memories awakened by the simple songs of a countryside in Eirinn. The intense love of the old land that has lived through long years of exile in strange places far away, was revealed in the scores of letters received.

And so the second edition goes out gladly to find new readers, and to bring them a little of the peace and happiness, the untarnished ideals and golden memories that are still, huidheachas le Dia, to be found in many an Irish glen.

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FOREWORD

WHO comes to this book seeking elegant poetry or great literature may be sadly disappointed. Threadbare themes and hackneyed metres and commonplace thoughts and everyday ideas only may be here, but there is sincerity, there is love, there are mellow, golden memories that only grow brighter with the passing of the years, and that are interwoven in every verse that follows. Some of these songs were written thirty years ago, some within the past few months, and the others have lilted their way into words during the years between, in strange places and in all sorts of circumstances. Into a cellar under the streets of Dublin, where flaring gas-jets were but a poor substitute for the glowing summer sunshine without, memories came trooping of pleasant places and glad days in Glen na Mona, memories that insisted on shaping themselves into songs that were solace and strength to the singer in many an hour when his heart was hungry for home. In prison cells, darkened by the towering factory chimneys of English cities, the voices of thrush and blackbird, of cuckoo and corncrake, away in Glen na Mona, the croon of the breeze above wide stretches of purple heather, the happy laughter of children, the rustling of ripe corn under a harvest moon, the joys of pattern day and bonfire night, the flashing of silver streams in summer, the leaping flames of glowing peat-fires on winter nights, the ballads, the music, the merri-

ment of years long past and gone, came in through the narrow grating set high in a gloomy wall, and with them came songs that would not be denied.

In heart-searing prison camps in the mountains of Wales and on the Curragh of Kildare, memories of that dream-haunted glen, set like a haven of rest amid the green fields of Meath, came on silent feet to a lonely singer and brought him song after song of home and friends, of Ireland and of God. To him they are sweeter than they can ever be to readers who do not know their history or the peace that followed them on dreary days that seemed to be clouded by despair.

Because of sweet associations, verses that an impartial critic might exclude have been allowed into this collection ; no matter how severely they may be dealt with by those who decide the fate of books, they will remain for ever dear to the singer of them, who loves the humblest bramble as fondly as the kingliest sun-kissed tree in the woods of Glen na Mona.

BRIAN O'HIGGINS.

June, 1929.

Glen na Mona

'MONG the noises of the city and the rushing of the crowd,
With a thousand voices mingling and the dust a blinding cloud,
Sometimes playing round my forehead comes a breath of bogland air,
Bringing dreams of Glen na Mona, till I think I'm walking there.

Ah ! you don't know Glen na Mona or you wouldn't scoff at all,
And it isn't false to manhood if a tear or two will fall
When there's hunger in the heart of one—aye ! worse than any pain,
And the wild eternal longing for a glimpse of home again.

O, 'twas grand in Glen na Mona when the day was newly born,
With the waving of the heather and the rustling of the corn,
And the dews across the bogland, like the footprints of the Sidhe,
And a blue veil slowly lifting from the face of Cnoc na Riogh.

And 'twas grand in Glen na Mona in the glory of the noon,
With the lark above near heaven lilting out a merry tune,
And the heather blossoms laughing at the gloomy, frowning trees,
And the silent grasses listening to the crooning of the breeze.

And 'twas grand in Glen na Mona when the sun was in the west
And the crowds of travel-weary birds were flying home to rest,
With the furze a shield of gold upon the breast of Cnoc na Riogh,
And the shadows creeping out across the bog, like boats at sea.

And O for Glen na Mona in the silence of the night,
With the ceannabhan like stars among the heather shining white,
And the moonlight making spears of all the tree-tops in the grove,
And of every little grassy nook a silvery, silent cove.

Ah ! sure sorrow's on the city, where the laugh is like a wail,
Where they pass you by unspeaking, and their faces sad and pale
O, I'm longing for the piping of a thrush that's far away,
And the hunger's in my heart for Glen na Mona night and day.

A BOREEN FAR AWAY

THERE'S a little rugged boreen far away!
Where the dusty road is winding to the dreamy, golden West,
And the heather hills are sleeping like a weary host at rest;
And when evening shades are falling,
I can hear the birdeens calling,
In that little rugged boreen far away!

O! that little rugged boreen far away!
How our thoughts at times will leap across the chasm of the years,
And the voices of the past will come unbidden to our ears,
And will touch our hearts in greeting,
Like the leafy branches meeting,
O'er that little rugged boreen far away!

O! that little rugged boreen far away!
When the hawthorn scent was floating on the holy morning air,
And the fairy dew was glistening on the pure white blossoms there,
And the thrushes all a-singing,
On the branches lightly swinging,
In that little rugged boreen far away!

O! that little rugged boreen far away!
With the grand old poplars thrusting up their heads into the sky,
'Till you'd think they'd say, "God save ye," to the white clouds drifting by;
And the leaves with laughter shaking
At their mystic merry-making,
In that little rugged boreen far away!

O! that little rugged boreen far away!
When the people sat at evening in the shadow of the trees,
And with voices low and gentle as the whispering of the breeze,
Passed the time in song and story,
'Till the stars came out in glory,
O'er that little rugged boreen far away!

O, I love that little boreen far away!
It is shrined within my memory like a mother's angel smile,
That no clouds of earth can darken, and no change of time defile;
And my love shall live, unending,
As the blue sky lowly bending
O'er that little rugged boreen far away!

MAY DEVOTIONS

FAIR is the light on the Virgin's Altar,
Fair are the flowers that cover it o'er,
And their scent floats down to the people kneeling
In rows far back to the open door,
Where the lingering sunlight gleams and sparkles
Ere it hies away to its home of rest
Beyond the crest of the shadowy mountains
That call it away to the kindly West;
And it seems to be waiting, expectant, there
For the first sweet sound of the fervent prayer:
"Pray for us, Mother, O Star of the Sea!
Mary, our hope and our trust are in thee!"

Little birds peep in at the Virgin's Altar;
They have come to the door where the sunlight waits;
They seem like angels some bright soul guarding
That waits for its crown at the Golden Gates.
Now they enter shyly, all hushed and silent;
Not a sound they make as they glide around;
Their hearts have silenced the joyous warbling
That rang all day o'er the flower-strewn ground.
And they, too, are waiting and listening there
For the first, sweet sound of the fervent prayer:
Guide us, O Mother, sweet Star of the Sea!
Mary, our hope and our trust are in thee!"

All eyes are fixed on the Virgin's Altar;
All hearts are raised to the Virgin Queen;
She is always near them—in woe or sorrow
Their souls on Mary for succour lean.
And when joy is with them they praise her for it,
And bless her name with their every breath;
They know that some day she will help to lead them
To God through the Valley of Gloom and Death.
And with souls upraised they are breathing there
The first sweet sound of the fervent prayer:
"Help of the Weak, O Star of the Sea!
Pray for us, Mary—our hope is in thee!"

Now they are gone from the Virgin's Altar;
The darkness of evening around it falls;
The sun is hidden beyond the mountain—
Away in the meadow the blackbird calls;
But their hearts bear with them the inspiration
That Mary gives them this evening bright—
To work for God until He shall call them
Away to His Home in the Land of Light.
And still they seem to be kneeling there,
And breathing to Heaven the fervent prayer:
"Queen of the Angels, O Star of the Sea!
Pray for us, Mary, and guide us to thee!"

A THRUSH'S SALUTATION

DIA agus Muire dhuit, a smoilin o,
Sitting up there 'mong the sheltering leaves,
Sending your greeting to all below—
To the heart that is glad and the heart that grieves.

Sweetly, clearly, the whole day long,
From early dawn till the shadows fall,
Filling the air with your joyous song,
Your hymn of praise to the Lord of All!

"Dia dhuit, Dia dhuit"—bright and gay
Is your greeting for each of us here below,
And our hearts beat high as we softly say—
"Dia agus Muire dhuit, a smoilin o!"

Dia agus Muire dhuit, a smoilin o.
The world grows bright when we hear you sing,
The shadows flee and the hope lights glow,
And the earth is filled with the joy of Spring.

A smoilin! we love you each day the more;
Your song in our souls shall never die,
'Till the woes and the cares of life are o'er
And the Home Stars shine in the Western sky.

"Dia dhuit, Dia dhuit"—day by day
You call as we pass you to and fro,
And our hearts beat high as we softly say:
"Dia agus Muire dhuit, a smoilin o!"

THE WIND ABOVE THE DEAD

Written after a visit to the Grave of William Rooney in Glasnevin Cemetery.

I KNELT by his grave on a summer morning;
The sun shone brightly above my head;
The soft wind sang with a thousand voices
Over the clay of the noble dead.

And it spoke—or was it a spirit whispering?—
"Do not mourn for him—do not weep;
His is a place among God's own chosen;
Soft is his rest, and calm his sleep.

"For his land he lived; her sorrows touched him,
And fired his heart with a holy flame
That burned to ashes its earthly casket,
Nor ceased to glow till the ending came.

"For his land he died—and his young life's teaching
Shall gleam like a beacon in Memory's sky;
Guiding his race to where he would lead them—
Perhaps 'twas better that he should die!

"He waited here with a feverish longing
For the light and scent of the early May;
It came, with its glory of bud and blossom,
And the heart that loved it was borne away

"To walk 'mid the flowers that are always blooming,
To rest in the valleys where Angels sing,
In his own I-Breasail of life unending,
Where souls are free, and where God is King!

"Let men not mourn him, but follow his teaching"—
And the voice of the wind with hope was filled;
"No need to mourn him," it sang more softly,
Then sank beside me, its crooning stilled.

I lifted my soul from his grave that morning
In a prayer to God, that he soon might see,
From his place of rest in the Halls of Glory,
The land that he lived for—and died for—free!

LONGING FOR THE SUMMER

YOU are longing for the summer,
For the sunlight softly beaming,
For the land with pleasure teeming,
And the skies forever clear;
For the mountains smiling kindly,
For the lakes in beauty sleeping,
And the little wild flowers peeping
Thro' the hedges without fear:
You are longing for the joytime of the earth and sea and sky;
For the gladness and the brightness of the summer—so am I.

You are longing for the summer,
For the richness and the glory
Of the hedgerows, tall and hoary,
Shading many a pleasant lane;
With their wealth of fragrant blossom,
Where the tiny birds are tripping,
Where the silver drops are dripping
After kindly Irish rain:
You are longing for the bogland where the slanting sunbeams lie,
For the perfume of the clover in the meadows—so am I.

You are longing for the summer,
For the river's sweet carolling,
For the shining wavelets rolling
O'er its bosom in the sun;
For the peaceful, holy evening,
When the bells, far-off, are pealing,
And the shades are slowly stealing
O'er the meadows, one by one:
You are longing for the twilight, when the birdeens homeward fly,
For the glamour of the silent summer gloaming—so am I.

I LOVE YOU TIPPERARY

I LOVE you, Tipperary dear, for sake of him who told
The tale of homely "Knocknagow"—its hearts as true as gold—
For sake of "Mat the Thresher's" strength, and Nora Lahy's grace,
I love you, Tipperary, tho' I never saw your face.

I love you, Tipperary, dear, for sake of Cnoc Maol Donn,
For sake of smiling Sliabh na mBan, that never wore a frown;
Where sunbeams, laughing all the while, the lurking shadows chase—
Oh! I love you, Tipperary, tho' I never saw your face.

I love you, Tipperary dear, for sake of Galtaigh Mor,
That gazes down in kingly pride on Barrow, Suir, and Nore;
For sake of all the singing streams that o'er your bosom race,
I love you, Tipperary, tho' I never saw your face.

For sake of all the beauty-spots that help to make you fair—
Clonmel and Cashel, famed of old, and kindly-hearted Cahir—
For Thurles, Nenagh, Carrick dear, and many another place,
I love you, Tipperary, tho' I never saw your face.

I love you best of all, perhaps, for sake of one dear friend,
Within whose eyes your smiles and tears forever meet and blend,
Whose trust and friendship freely given, no change could e'er efface—
O! I love you, Tipperary, tho' I never saw your face.

I love you, Tipperary dear, for sake of each and all;
By night and day on you, a stor, may kindly blessings fall;
May sorrow pass you lightly o'er, and never leave a trace;
God bless you, Tipperary, tho' I ne'er may see your face.

THE LARK IN GLEN NA MONA

IN the olden, golden days, ere the skies were ever grey,
When the only things that troubled me were books, and dreams and play,
A lark there used to soar and sing above a far-off glen,
And never sweeter song I've heard in all the years since then.

He sang a beauteous Land, all unknown to mortal ken;
Where the soil was ne'er polluted by the feet of warring men;
Where Love and Peace were king and queen, and held an endless sway;
Ah me! that Land, each day that dies, the farther seems away!

I've yearned, world-worn, for the lark and for the Land,
For his song to bring me near it, for its joy-bejewelled strand;
But vain the cry within my heart, no more I'll hear him sing,
Or see its dream-light gleaming in the sunshine on his wing.

O, many a song I've heard, and many a singer sweet,
As up Life's rugged ways I've walked, with travel-weary feet;
I've seen them sway a thousand hearts in many a princely hall,
But the lark in Glen na Mona was the sweetest of them all!

TO A POET

YOU say that your songs are worthless,
That better were they unsung.
Have they eased no heart in all the throng
Where Woe his darts has flung ?
Have they brought no flash of pleasure
To a dull and grief-dimmed eye ?
Have they brought no blessed bliss to *you ?*
If not, then let them die.

But O ! they are not worthless
If they have drawn apart
From the jarring world, for a brief, bright space,
One sad and lonely heart !
And if hope they've brought to the wretched,
To the weary a calm, sweet dream,
More priceless are they than the fairest gems
In the crowns of kings that gleam !

No song is ever worthless,
It is part of the Lord's Decree;
The songs He gave to the unseen winds,
To the birds, and the mighty sea—
The poet must clothe in language
For his fellow-men to hear,
And know that in every darkened hour
There's a home-light always near.

So sing your songs—not worthless,
But better than gems or gold—
They'll come back, singing, to you, some day,
And sweeter a thousand-fold.
Sing them ! for set in the Desert
Of Life—like sparkling springs—
Are kindly deeds, and trust, and love,
And the songs that the poet sings !

A DREAM BESIDE THE FIRE

I'M dreaming here beside the fire, and I see in the flames that rise,
A land as fair as e'er God blest, and over it smiling skies;
The ocean waves to a beauteous shore come laden with silver spray,
And my thoughts are borne to byegone times in Eirinn far away!

I gaze again on her kingly hills—the brave old hills I love!
That reach for the message the breezes bring from the floating hills above;
They nod their heads to the rising sun, they waft him a kiss at noon;
And at eve, on their slopes, his lingering rays, like golden flowers, are strewn.

I wander again her storied glens, I sit by her silvery streams,
I list again to their constant croon—like the songs we hear in dreams—
Its burden is ever a broken sigh for the golden long ago,
Ere the holy head of my Roisin Dubh bowed down for its crown of woe.

But mingling now with the sorrow-song is a glorious hymn of hope,
That tells of a day when joy shall reign, when sleep-filled eyes shall ope,
When hearts shall throb with a holy pride, and Roisin's grief-bowed head
Shall doff the crown of woe, and don the freedom-crown instead!

I walk again with the friends I love, their voices reach my ears,
I share their laughter, I hear their songs, I see their smiles and tears;
The truest-hearted friends on earth! I feel their hands in mine,
And plan our pathway down the years—a bright, unbroken line.

'Twas but a dream beside the fire, and, like the fire, it died;
But ah! 'twas sweeter, the while it lived, than all the world beside;
God guard the ones it brought so near, and may He grant, some day,
That it come true, for them and me, in Eirinn far away!

THE POOR LONE BOY

Fonn—" Gheobhaim aris an Cruiscin".

THERE'S a certain purty cailin og, I'll tell you what her name is,
She lives beyond Cill Scire, where the little runnin' sthrame is;
She stole the heart away from me, with fairy chains she bound it,
She smiles on every buachaill in the parish and around it;
But she doesn't care a traithnin for a poor lone boy.

Chorus

O, gradh mo chroidhe mo Roisin, slainte geal mo stoirin;
She'd turn all my weary woe to happiness and joy,
With a single word of welcome to a poor lone boy.

I'm not the one to boast about the beauty of mo stoirin,
Tho' if you wandered over every hill and glen and boithrin,
And even if you travelled on the magic steed of Oisin,
You'd seek in vain through Eirinn for a fairer flower than Roisin;
Ah, but where's the use in talkin' for a poor lone boy.

Chorus

Her eyes are like the summer skies, her hair is brown an' curlin',
Her voice is like the singin' sthrame among the sedges purlin';
Whene'er she smiles at all you'd swear 'tis coaxin' you the rogue is,
An' you'd think her little lips are always askin' what a pog is;
But they never whisper "failte" to a poor lone boy.

Chorus

I'll step across the runnin' sthrame that's liltin' like a tuirnin,
I'll meet her an' I'll tell her how I'm pinin' for mo mhuirnin,
An' 'tis I will have the heart of joy, of joy beyond comparin',
An' 'tis I will be the proudest lad in all the land of Eireann,
If she'll only whisper "failte" to a poor lone boy.

Chorus

THE SWEETEST SONGS OF ALL

THERE are songs of mirth and gladness,
There are glorious pæans of joy,
There are soul-entrancing melodies
That nothing can destroy;
There are battle-hymns of Freedom,
Each a mighty bugle call;
But the songs of little children
Are the sweetest songs of all.

For in every note there's beauty,
Like the rose's first perfume,
That will lose its fairest charms
When the grander scent of bloom
Comes to rend the robes of glamour
That around our senses fall.
O, the songs of little children
Are the sweetest songs of all.

We may hear a thrilling anthem
That will merit all our praise,
And our minds will lose its meaning
With the passing of the days;
But the warbling of the young hearts
Lives thro' time in memory's hall.
Ah, the songs of little children
Are the sweetest songs of all.

For they speak the heart unruffled
And the soul without a stain,
Where the light of God is burning
And where Truth and Virtue reign
And their strains, like angel music,
Never pass beyond recall,
Ah, the songs of little children
Are the sweetest songs of all.

THE STORY ST. PATRICK TOLD

WITH wondering looks they gathered close about him,
And held his hand, and kissed the robe he wore,
The children of the gentle Gaels of Eire,
Whose hearts would soon the King of kings adore.

And Patrick gave his message to the children,
Because he knew their lips would bear it forth
And spread it through the pleasant fields of Eire,
From East to West, from South to kingly North.

He told them of the Holy One, the Saviour
Who came upon the earth—a little Child—
To bear a Cross and die upon Mount Calvary,
That souls might enter Heaven undefiled.

He told them of the God of Truth and Justice,
The God of Peace, of Mercy, and of Love,
Who made the sun and stars, the earth and ocean—
He told them of His Home in Heaven above.

And while they gathered closer still about him,
He stooped, and plucked a shamrock from the sod,
And pointing to the leaves and stem he told them
Of Three Immortal Persons in One God.

Their hearts were won, their faith grew strong and deathless,
And through the land they went with voices raised;
The wonders of the One True God they chanted,
His mercy and His majesty they praised.

And so it grew, and so it blooms in Eirinn—
The Flower of Faith—God grant it may not fail,
But ever shed the beauty of its fragrance
Among the gentle children of the Gael!

IN AN ENGLISH PRISON

TO Eire of the purple hills
My thoughts for ever go;
To Eire of the flashing streams
Through meadows green that flow;
To Eire of the misty glens,
Where dreams long vigil keep;
To Eire of the churchyards blest,
Where deathless martyrs sleep.

To Eire of the clean, true hearts
My blessing swiftly speeds;
For Eire's hopes, for Eire's dreams
I tell my loved brown beads;
For every hand that tries to lift
Our Mother's load of care,
Here in my narrow prison cell
Each morn I breathe a prayer.

At every dawn, at every noon,
At every evening's close
I think of Eire's love and faith,
Of Eire's countless woes.
My heart cries out to Mary's Son
In every prayer I pray:
"Dear God! remember Eire's night,
And speed her cloudless day."

THE RETURN OF THE FAIRIES

(Place—Beann Eadair. Time—1902.)

THE moonlight was shining on mountain and lea,
A soft wind came in from the calm-breathing sea;
It sang thro' the grasses that trembled with bliss
At the sound of its voice and the warmth of its kiss;
It lingered awhile 'mid the gorse on the hill,
Then wandered away to the glen and the rill,
The moat, and the bog, and the woodland to meet,
The meadows, and flowerets, and birdeens to greet.

And fast in its train came the sweet crooning sound
Of music, that called forth the echoes around.
It went o'er the sea and it went o'er the land,
And then, as if stirred by a Chieftain's command,
From the rocks, and the grasses, and down thro' the air,
Came thousands of figures all clustering there.
Laughing, and skipping, and bounding they came,
Like sparks wreathing up from the peat-fire's flame.
Such odd little faces! such bright little eyes!
That seemed like the stars peeping out from the skies,
And each was so fragile, and tiny and small,
That a blast from the mountain would scatter them all.

Then one who walked proudly apart from the rest,
With a crown on his head and a star on his breast,
Waved his hand with a grace that no mortal could own,
And quickly they brought forth a wee golden throne.
He mounted its steps, and he gazed on each clan,
And then such a tumult and clamour began!
They leaped, and they danced, and they shouted in glee,
"Hurra! and hurra! for the King of the Sidhe!"
He lifted his arm and waved it again,
And silent at once were the wee fairy men,
Then, settling the bright-jewelled crown on his head,
In a voice like the sweetest of music, he said:

"O Fairies of Leinster! 'tis many a year
Since we gathered in council or mirth-making here.
When the people we loved became heedless and cold,
And cast away treasures more precious than gold,
When they turned from their speech, with its beautiful blas,
And took to their bosoms the cold, alien dross,

When they banished their customs, and stories and games,
And burned all their Past in the Sasanach flames.
We could linger no more in that Land of Decay,
Where despair on men's hearts like a winter mist lay.
When we bade them be careful they laughed at our fears,
They scoffed at our warnings, and pleadings and tears,
Then they flouted our name—but we said not a word,
Only vowed in our hearts that no more would be heard
Our music and song by the lone woodland paths,
The calm-flowing rivers, and green-mantled raths:
So we spoke to Beann Eadair a broken adieu,
And away to the eastward and westward we flew,
To the northward and southward we went with the wind,
Nor cared not, while Leinster we left far behind.

To-night we have come to Beann Eadair again,
And there's joy in our hearts that were darkened with pain,
For the mortals of Leinster are waking at last:
They looked in their hearts as the years drifted past,
They tore off the veil that had blinded their eyes
Like the night-cloud when over the valley it lies;
They are seeking the treasures they lost in the night,
They have seen that our warnings and teachings were right;

They know that when we had our homes on their sod
They were truer to Eire and truer to God;
Their hands are stretched outward to clasp us in peace,
And I ask you to-night: Shall our wandering cease?
Shall we come back again to the Land of our love,
And sing over bogland, and mountain, and grove?
Shall we live in the hearts of the young and the old,
And drive out the wolf that would ravage the fold?"
He paused and looked over the host on the hill,
And the Legions of Fairies all shouted: "We will!"

Their cry swelled and swept o'er the rocks and the caves,
And its echoes came back from the far-stretching waves,
Then away from Beann Eadair it sped on the gale,
Over moorland, and mountain, and woodland, and vale,
Till the mortals of Leinster were roused by its sound,
And their answer came, clear, like the breeze's rebound:
"Too long have we lain with the sleep on our eyes,
But the dawn is now chasing the gloom from the skies.
Céad fáilte abhaile, a Mhuinntir na Sidhe,
'S nár fhágaidh sibh Laighin go bráth, bráth arís!"

NELL FROM TIPPERARY

(Air—Roddy Mor the Rover).

O DRAW you near until you hear my wail of lamentation;
My heart is gone with her who won the praises of the nation,
And I that walked and laughed and talked as blithe as any fairy
Can only pine and wish that mine was Nell from Tipperary.

I'll tell no lie, her roguish eye it captured me complately,
It spun me round on slippery ground until I wondered greatly
If 'twas upon my heels or head or hands that I was walkin',
And when it came to sayin' a word she clinched it with her talkin'.

I've travelled far on cart and car in fair and stormy saison,
To many a maid my court I've paid and pleased her with my praisin',
But tongue and mind got out of joint and wobbled most contrary
When o'er them fell the fairy spell of Nell from Tipperary.

I'd dig and delve from twelve to twelve, I'd scale the cliffs of Eireann,
I'd row the seas and plough the leas, for wet and wind uncarin',
I'd tramp the road and bear a load from Dingle to Dunleary—
Aye, every mile—to win the smile of Nell from Tipperary.

I'll say no more, my heart is sore, you'd nearly hear it achin';
'Tis cracked in two, and very soon to pieces 'twill be breakin';
No ease of mind I'll ever find—poor, love-sick Con O'Leary—
Till by my side a smilin' bride, sits Nell from Tipperary.

THE ROSE OF REMEMBRANCE

WHEN all other flowers have faded and died,
When lost and forgotten they sleep in the tomb;
When breezes a requiem o'er them have sighed,
There is one ever young, ever rich in perfume.

'Tis the Rose of Remembrance, the fairest of all,
That the Master has placed in the gardens of men;
When the cold shades of sorrow unpityingly fall,
Its beauty and fragrance are known to us then.

'Tis the Rose of Remembrance, the guardian of love,
The symbol of friendship, the sister of truth;
O'er the dark waves of time, where the long shadows move,
Bearing age back again to the gladness of youth.

O Rose of Remembrance! come closer to me,
Till my thoughts glide around you like calm-flowing streams;
And comfort my heart when my eyes only see
The gloom of the past and the grave of my dreams.

THE LITTLE ONES

OH, love you well the little ones,
And shield them from the strife;
Too soon they'll know the sorrows
And the weary ways of life.
Too soon they'll know the achings,
And the crosses, and the woe:
When they're toiling up the mountain
From the pleasant plains below.

Oh, love you well the little ones,
And win each guileless heart;
Too soon, indeed, will come the day
When you and they must part.
A cheery smile, a gentle word,
A kindly, generous deed
Will touch their souls, and blossom there:
The fruits will tell the seed.

Oh, love you well the little ones,
And serve them when you may;
Bright flowerets are they, blooming
By a rough and barren way.
And yours the hand to raise them up,
Or plant the weeds of doom:
Your lips can speak their future fate:
"To wither," or "to bloom."

Oh, love you well the little ones,
When pain comes swooping down,
Be yours the task to meet it there,
And chase away its frown.
Remember, you were once a child!
Remember, Christ has said:
"Oh, love you well the little ones,
Of such is Heaven made."

THE VALLEY OF THE BOYNE

IN the green, green valley of the Boyne
There's a shining, silent river, with a smooth, unruffled breast.
Stretching o'er it, when they're weary, summer sunbeams love to rest;
Their absence seems to grieve it,
And they linger ere they leave it,
In the green, green valley of the Boyne.

In the green, green valley of the Boyne
The breezes only whisper as they gently pass along,
O'er the river in the moonlight, misty armies thickly throng:
There is peace beyond all telling,
There are dreams for ever dwelling,
In the green, green valley of the Boyne.

In the green, green valley of the Boyne
There are trees—like olden heroes—reaching high into the air,
Shutting out the noisy world from a scene so pure and fair;
O'er the river's peaceful sleeping
Faithful vigil bravely keeping,
In the green, green valley of the Boyne.

In the green, green valley of the Boyne,
When the morning sun comes smiling o'er the storied Hill of Slane,
Chasing all the gloom before it, leaving gladness in its train,
You would almost think it lingers,
Spreading gems with loving fingers,
O'er the green, green valley of the Boyne.

In the green, green valley of the Boyne,
When the evening sun is kissing every blossom with its rays,
From the kingly woods of Beauparc to the pleasant fields of Hayes,
Ah! the world in vain you'd wander
For a picture fairer, grander,
Than the green, green valley of the Boyne.

I love you, O valley of the Boyne!
Every little leaf of ivy clinging close to Maiden Rock,
Every ripple on the river, where the misty armies flock,
For the golden dreams you bring me,
For the olden songs you sing me,
I love you, O valley of the Boyne!

A RHYMER'S REMONSTRANCE

(To a Poet.)

O MY head is fairly moidered with the rhyming and romancing
And the lilting and the singing every moment of the day,
And the thoughts I should be keeping all a-through my brain are dancing,
And I'm saying every ha'porth but the things I want to say.

It's on you the blame is resting, for 'twas you that set me raving
With your talk about the birdeens and the songs you hear them sing,
And the hedges, white with blossoms, and the dewy meadows waving,
And the sunny summer evenings and the joy they always bring.

It was you that set me crazy and that sent my fancy climbing
High above the weary world to the glamour of the sky;
And 'tis you that keeps the fuel to the fire of my rhyming,
Just as if you made a promise that you'd never let it die.

For a lilting song will come to me without a word of warning,
And bring into the heart of me a silver stream of light,
And before I frame an answer to your pleasant "*Poet, good morning,*"
I'm listening, lost in wonder, to your tender, "*Poet, good night.*"

And the time I should be sleeping I must spend it all in thinking
Of the metre and the manner of the answer that I'll send,
Till the rhymes get mixed together and my eyes go blinking, blinking—
Och ! I don't know what I'll do with you or where it's going to end.

Troth, it's you that needs the chiding, and it's you I should be scoldin'
For the way you set me rhyming with a turn of your pen,
And instead of that I'm thinking every word of yours is golden,
And I'm longing for the coming of your little song again.

TERENCE MacSWINEY

(Written October 25th, 1920.)

SHED we no tear for you, Terence MacSwiney!
God set the seal of His love on your brow;
Gave you to Ireland—a saint and a soldier—
Who can be fitter to plead for her now?

Joy for the valiant, heroic heart of you!
Joy for the soul of you, whiter than snow!
Joy for the Cause that has claimed your allegiance!
Your death is its challenge to friend and to foe!

Raise we no caoine for you, Terence MacSwiney!
High is our pride in your name and your deed;
Humble our prayer to the great God of Battles,
That we, too, be strong in the dark hour of need.

Joy for your love and your faith and your courage,
Glowing and glad to the last anguished breath!
Thanks be to God for you, Terence MacSwiney!
Thanks be to God for your life and your death!

IN PRAISE OF BOOKS

I. WHAT A GOOD BOOK IS

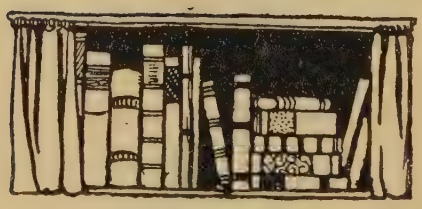
JOY of living, joy of laughter,
Joy of romance, joy of lore,
Joy of memory-laden hours,
Joy of wood, of hill, of shore;

Joy of God's unbounded mercy,
Warming hearts with sorrow numb,
Joy of truth and peace and beauty,
Joy of endless joys to come.

II. THANK GOD FOR A BOOK

THANK God for a book! A buoyant book,
A solemn book, a glad book,
A thoughtful book, a thrilling book,
A merry book, a sad book.

The plans we made may fail and fade,
The fondest hearts may sever,
Our hopes may die, our joys go by,
But a book's a friend for ever.



MAY EVE

NO sound across the valley, save the whispering of the birds,
A holy peace o'er all the earth, a peace too sweet for words;
A tinge of gold across the sky, above the mountain's crest
That reaches up to kiss the fleecy cloudlets in the west.

A dreamy scent of blossom is floating on the air
('Tis the voice of hedgerows, gloating in the rich, green robes they wear).
O'er bog and bawn and hillside the dews are falling white,
A fairy bed preparing for the sleeping of the night.

Old hearts are throbbing buoyantly, old eyes are bright with joy,
Young hearts are filled with songs of hope—the gold without alloy;
The breezes speak of peace and love, the clouds are far away,
And all the world is waiting for the coming of the May.

BEYOND THE BOG
(An Irish Mother's Musing.)

I'M sittin' alone, lookin' out to the West,
Where the light o' day is dyin',
And a sob swells up in my weary breast
And the tears from my eyes I'm dryin';
For Seaghan, my boy, is goin' away!
He says to me he'll come back some day,
But I'm thinkin' he'll sleep in the stranger's clay,
In the world beyond the bog.

Our world was here by the bog-land side,
With the heather around us bloomin,'
And stretchin' away from us, far and wide,
To the hills in the Eastward loomin'.
Our home was small, but 'twas all our own;
Mo leun! 'tis now 'twill be sad and lone,
For its light and its hope will soon be goin'
To the world beyond the bog.

I thought he'd stay with us always here
(Sure 'twas only a mother's dreamin'),
His father's path and my own to cheer,
Till we'd see God's home-lights gleamin'.
My pride was he, so fair and tall;
How my poor heart wailed like the Bean-Sidhe's call
When he said, "I'll be goin' in the early Fall
To the world beyond the bog."

He says that he'll send me a store of gold,
But 'tis little I care about it;
For all he may say, it is poor and cold,
And I'd rather have *him* without it.
For 'twould be like sellin' our own ceanabhan
For a faded rose from the stranger's lawn,
If I'd look in vain for my brown-eyed Seaghan
To the world beyond the bog.

. . . .

O, gossoons of Ireland, learn to love
The land where your dead are sleepin';
Before ye set out o'er the seas to rove,
Think, think of a mother's weepin'.
Think of the heart where the true gold lies.
Where the pure, strong love for ye never dies,
And turn the light of your longin' eyes
From that world beyond the bog.

THE COMICAL BOY

(Air—"The Swaggering Jig.")

A STOIRIN, O how can you tease,
When you know that I'm faithful and true;
Sure my heart is as light as the breeze
Whenever I'm looking at you.
There isn't a land or a throne,
Or anything under the sun,
But I'd give for one jewel alone—
A jewel that's hard to be won.
Chorus
And O, Roisin, a stoirin,
No palace or castle for me;
I'd rather a cot in a boithrin
With you in it, 'stoirin mo chroidhe.

You give me a glance of your eye;
I dance in the height of my joy;
Then you say with a sort of a sigh,
"Mhaise now, you're a comical boy."
You frown—and I wish I were dead;
You smile—and I'm anxious to live.
Sure I'd rather one hair of your head
Than the riches the world can give.
Chorus.

I'm wasted to nothing—or less—
With the weight of my grief and my woe.
I want you to answer me "Yes,"
And you're constantly answering "No!"
As you trip with a laugh through the dance,
I sit in a corner and pine,
A-dreaming, like one in a trance,
That maybe some day you'll be mine.
Chorus.

A stoirin, I'll wait for the word;
I know that you'll speak it some day,
And then, with a heart like a bird,
I'll bear you in triumph away;
And there won't be a happier pair
From far-away Foyle to Fermoy,
When your beautiful self is my share,
And yours is—the "comical boy."
Chorus.
And O, Roisin, a stoirin,
No king will be equal to me,
When I come to that cot in the boithrin,
With you in it, 'stoirin mo chroidhe.

THE DYING SAGART

(Father Eugene O'Growney.)

THE autumn sun is shining o'er the Irish hills of green,
In autumn's fairest, brightest garb the Irish vales are seen;
The woods and streams and fairy glens all show surpassing fair;
The purest charms that nature owns give forth their beauty there.

And in Columbia's far-off land a dying sagart lies,
And thinks of many a well-loved scene beneath the Irish skies;
And wonders if the winds that sigh and murmur through the trees
Were wafted from his own dear home, with love across the seas.

The fair broad plains of Royal Meath stretch out before his gaze,
And fancy shows his childhood's haunts, the dear familiar ways;
The beaten path across the fields, the rugged old boreen,
Where, as a child, he revelled 'mid the summer's scent and sheen.

The friends of boyhood throng around and grasp his feeble hand,
With sorrowing mien and tearful gaze beside his couch they stand;
And favourite playmates whisper low of simple pleasures flown,
And boyish tricks and pranks they played when life seemed all their own.

He sees himself—a youth imbued with all youth's hopes and dreams,
That coursed thro' mind and heart and brain like swiftly-flowing streams;
And bade him trace each change and turn in Eire's sad career,
When crushed by might, she lived on hope thro' many a century drear.

And how he yearned to raise to life his country's native tongue,
The tender speech so long untaught—the songs so long unsung.
And how his young heart wished that ere Death came he yet might see
Her children strong in manly pride, her hills and valleys free.

The dreamer chose a priestly life, and now his mind recalls
The projects planned for future years within the college walls;
The hopes and fears, the glowing thoughts come back with clearness now,
And bring a tinge of boyish flush across the pallid brow.

And now another scene looms up, and with it comes a sigh,
For memories sweet crowd fast around of glorious times gone by,
When still a youth he sped to learn his cherished mother tongue
From simple men and kindly dames the Connacht homes among.

And once again himself he sees, this time in priestly garb;
And heeding not the critic's jeer, the scoffer's poisoned barb,
But struggling on to raise his land from darkness and disgrace,
To spread once more from sea to sea the language of his race.

And lo! he sees the dawnlight break above the night of gloom;
His teaching helps to roll away one stone from Freedom's tomb.
He hears a murmur rise and swell that tells the day has come,
When manly thought, not servile cant, must build an Irish home.

But ah! the brightness of his life is marred by fell disease;
The homely joys and strife and toil 'mid native scenes must cease.
To fight that foe he needs must leave the land his heart adores,
So, like another Colmcille, he wanders from her shores.

But though he travelled far away, his heart was with her yet,
His every thought and wish and hope amid her hills were set;
And still he taught, and still he strove to lift the drooping head,
To rouse to action once again the spirit almost dead.

And so, while life is fading, the sagart's mind goes back,
And pauses at each scene that meets his gaze on memory's track;
The boyhood dreams, the manhood thoughts, all rise at Fancy's call,
While faster o'er that noble heart Death's gloomy shadows fall.

Then a look of deepest yearning comes across the worn face,
For the ties that time or exile from the heart can not efface;
With a prayer to Heaven breathing, to watch o'er the "olden sod,"
The soul goes floating upward to its Maker and its God.

. . . . . .

The autumn shades are falling o'er the hills of Innisfail,
The autumn winds are sighing, with a low, sad, plaintive wail;
For a whispering voice has floated o'er the ocean from the West,
And it tells that Eoghan O'Gramhnaigh from Life's toiling is at rest.

Then a throb of woe and sorrow shakes the land from shore to shore,
And the heart of the Gaelic Eire fills with anguish to the core,
And she cries, "O son, your ashes shall be brought to me some day;
Where your spirit lives your clay shall rest—within my breast for aye."

. . . . . .

The mighty deeds of warriors, as Time goes on, may fade;
Their actions and their names may sink forgotten in the shade;
But never while the Irish hills their lofty summits rise
Shall men forget to bless the clay where Eoghan O'Gramhnaigh lies.

GOD'S WEE FRIENDS

HAVE you heard the cuckoo and the corncrake sing
By wood and stream in the glen
Sweet hopeful songs that forever bring
New joy to the hearts of men,
And proclaim to the world that glorious Spring,
With its flowers, has come again ?

Have you heard the blackbird's cheery note
Ring out from the hedgerows gay,
And echo back from the old green moat
Where the lingering sunbeams play,
And away thro' the perfumed meadows float
'Mid the glory and sheen of May ?

Have you heard the lark when soaring high
Over fields of waving grain,
Pouring forth a hymn that can never die
In the hearts that have heard its strain,
That brings a gleam to the saddest eye
And a throb to the darkest brain ?

Have you heard the thrush's crooning flung
Over Autumn gardens fair,
And fading away the trees among
Like a lowly-murmured prayer,
Or a tender song in the Gaelic tongue
Borne far on the evening air ?

Have you heard the singers within the grove,
As they flutter round many a nest,
Singing songs that bring light and peace and love
To the heart in the care-filled breast,
Songs that bid us strive for the Goal above,
Where is only the perfect rest ?

Ah, yes, I have heard, and I bless them all
For the joy their gladness lends,
And I pray when Life's evening shadows fall,
When this weary journey ends,
That my soul may be free from earthly thrall
As the singing of God's wee friends.

ST. BRIGID'S DAY, 1920

A LITTLE Irish maiden sought St. Brigid
On her feast day, in the church upon the hill,
And pleaded with her in the twilight, saying:
"O, loving Saint, remember Ireland still!
You loved her in the far-off, golden ages,
And smiled on all who sang her praises then;
She needs you now, her heart is pierced with sorrow,
Her fair green fields are trod by wicked men.

Her best and bravest lie in dreary dungeons,
Or sleep beneath the sod in blood-marked graves,
Or flee from place to place like hunted felons,
Or seek a home beyond the ocean wave.
O, Mary of the Gael! remember Ireland;
Let wrong not sell her in the devil's mart;
Ask for her to-day and for her children
The strength and succour of the Sacred Heart!"

Did the little maiden hear (or was she dreaming!)
A soft Voice floating on the twilight air?
"Be brave, be strong, O, faithful child of Eirinn,
The Heart of God has hearkened to your prayer.
The land you love has borne many a sorrow,
And many a day of woe awaits her still,
But if she clings to Me in all her sufferings
She yet shall stand upon the sun-kissed hill!

Her life shall be the lantern of the world,
Her homes shall send out rays of love and peace,
To lead the nations back to Heaven's pathway,
To show why wrong and tyranny should cease;
Her joy shall be the joy that springs from suffering,
From thraldom and from torture and from loss,
And never for one hour shall I forsake her,
Because for Me she bore the martyr's cross!"

RESIGNATION.

(An Irish Mother to her Dead Child.)

HOW cold and white and still you are, O little child of mine,
This morning in the summertime, when dew and blossom shine;
While merry birds are singing songs from leafy tree to tree,
The fairest bird of all is hushed, a leinbhin mo chroidhe.

'Tis bitter hard to think you're dead when all the world is gay,
And every voice is raised in joy to hail the blessed day;
When God's bright sunshine kisses flower, and lake, and hill, and lea,
And all is health and life but you, a leinbhin mo chroidhe.

The little eyes that always laughed are closed for evermore,
The heart that held my share of joy and all my earthly store
Will never bound with life again, will never beat for me,
For Death's cold hand has closed on all—a leinbhin mo chroidhe.

The bright, bright days you loved will come and pass away the same,
The birds will flit around the door and seem to speak your name,
And seem to ask me where's the child that used to laugh with glee
To hear their low, sweet piping notes, a leinbhin mo chroidhe.

Ah, little does the world know, with all its pomp and glare,
The yearning of a mother's heart, the love that's burning there;
I'd envy not their shining gold, their kingdoms fair and free,
If I could only keep you here, a leinbhin mo chroidhe.

But o'er my sorrow shines the thought of Mary and her Son,
And Mary's smile shall soothe my grief and guide my footsteps on
Till, if God wills, I'll clasp your hand beyond the Eternal Sea,
And we shall meet—no more to part—a leinbhin mo chroidhe.

DEATH IN EXILE

NEAR a city's heart, in a squalid room,
With throbbing temples, and halting breath,
Unknown, unseen, 'mid the crash and boom,
A daughter of Ireland fights with Death.

Alone, alone in the stranger's land—
Her dreamland once, but how cheerless now!—
With no voice to comfort, no kindly hand
To quench the fire of her throbbing brow.

'Tis the same sad story, so often told—
A home at the foot of an Irish hill,
A heart that craved for the stranger's gold;
A foolish head, and a wayward will.

Her mother pleaded, her father frowned,
And someone asked her with *him* to stay;
But no! 'twas vain: she was Westward bound:
"I will come back rich to you all some day."

And then in exile—the sickening heat,
The cold, strange faces, the city's roar;
The heart nigh broken, the faltering feet,
And the feeble hands that could toil no more.

And now she is dying of want and care,
Far, far from those who are fond and dear;
No friend beside her to breathe a prayer,
No priest, no mother—and Death so near!

"O God of pity!"—'tis faint and low,
A heart-wrung prayer, and a human cry—
"They are waiting at home for me still, I know:
O, let me see them before I die!"

The eyelids droop, and, with God's good will,
A vision comes that is fair and sweet:
She is back once more on the heath-clad hill,
In the midst of all that she longed to meet.

"O, mother, 'tis grand to be home again,
Where smiles are bright, and where hearts are true.
In the stranger's country there's always pain—
There's wealth, I know; but there's hunger, too.

"See the sunlight dancing on Cillin Ban,
And the raindrops glistening like joyous tears!
And here come Sighle, and Mike, and Seaghan,
To clasp my hand after all the years!

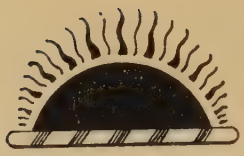
"And, mother, list to the birdeens' song!
They are singing, surely, to welcome me!
And the boys and girls, in one great throng,
Are gathering down by the old ash tree.

"I will join in the dance, for my heart is light—
But the place grows dark, and I wonder why—
Ah! the sun is setting; 'twill—soon—be—night—
And the stars—will shine—in the—clear blue sky."

Aye! 'the sun is setting'—The sun *has set*
For one poor exile no more to rise;
Its beams will dance on the mountains yet,
But never to gladden her sightless eyes.

A nameless grave, where the west winds blow—
A grave where nobody comes to pray—
There, one is sleeping who fain would go
To Cillin Ban, where the sunbeams play.

And far away, o'er the ocean wild,
In an Irish home, by an open door,
A mother prays for her absent child,
And waits—for one who will come no more.



TO THE SEA

O MYSTICAL, murmuring sea !
So mighty and yet so meek !
Would that the gift were given to me
Of thy strange, sweet songs to speak !
Thy secrets all to know,
And the words to understand,
That the wavelets croon as their lips bestow
A kiss on the lonely land.

O silvery, shimmering sea !
O beautiful work of Him
Whose name is on every wave of thee,
And shall be till the sun grows dim !
When fools would fain decry
The might of the Master's Hand,
Thy waters laugh to the listening sky,
Disdain for the lies they've planned.

O thundering, throbbing sea !
What anger is like to thine,
When thy billows rise in their majesty,
Dread armies drawn in line !
When thy face is charged with wrath,
And thy battle-shout rings high,
Few, few are they who would cross thy path,
And few thy might would try !

O restless, changing sea !
Thou art like to the human heart,
Where peace and passion, and gloom and glee
Are meeting, to drift apart;
Thy currents are joy and woe,
Thy waves are throbs of pride,
Thy wail is the grief that mortals know
When their best-beloved has died.

O slumbering, silent sea !
  True symbol of perfect peace,
That bids us hope for the Home to be,
  When the woes of the world shall cease !
Dreaming beside thee here,
  Where thou and the grasses meet,
We lose all thought of the sigh and tear,
  And sorrow itself is sweet.

O generous, gentle sea !
  Sing to my Eire dear,
That soon the shadows of grief shall flee,
  That the freedom hour is near,
That the night shall not come again,
  That the dawnlight, breaking grey,
Shall flash, ere long, over pass and plain,
  The glow of a glorious day !

PURTY PEGGY O!

DID you ever meet with Purty Peggy O!
That lives in Glen na Mona there below?
Did you ever see the dreaming,
And the light of laughter gleaming,
In the winsome eyes of Purty Peggy O?

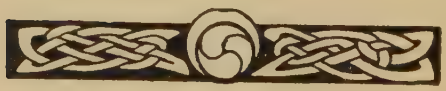
O, the brown, brown eyes of Purty Peggy O!
Where the gladness and the sadness come and go;
Where the streams of truth are flowing,
And the stars of love are glowing,
O, the witching eyes of Purty Peggy O!

And the gentle voice of Purty Peggy O!
With its tender tone of pleading, sweet and low
And the music of it breaking
Athrough every word she's speaking—
O, the coaxing voice of Purty Peggy O!

And the kindly heart of Purty Peggy O!
That hasn't in the world wide a foe;
That loves our lovely Eirinn
With a love beyond comparing—
Ah! the noble heart of Purty Peggy O!

May the years be kind to Purty Peggy O!
May they only touch her lightly as they go;
May the path that's out before her,
And the sky that's bending o'er her,
Be always bright for Purty Peggy O!

If you'll ever meet to Purty Peggy O!
That lives in Glen na Mona there below,
The word that you'll be saying,
And the prayer that you'll be praying,
Is, "May God be with you, Purty Peggy O!"



IN ROYAL MEATH

THERE are kingly woods in Royal Meath,
Like isles in wide green seas,
Where the breezes rise with a thousand sighs
'Mong the dreamy swaying trees;
Where the slanting, flashing sun-rays gleam
Like the spears of a warrior throng;
Where the birdeens sing, till the echoes ring
With the strains of a martial song.

There are pleasant vales in Royal Meath,
Hid deep the hills among,
Where fierce huzzas in the olden days
From warrior throats were flung;
Where brave men fought for Eire's sake,
And poured their blood like rain;
Gave blow for blow to every foe—
Thank God 'twas not in vain!

There are singing streams in Royal Meath
Whose voices never cease,
From dawn of day till the twilight grey
They chant their song of peace;
Their murmuring lives in the exile's heart,
With a weird, sad, haunting wail,
Like the cries of woe that must always go
In the track of the wandering Gaedheal.

There are love-lit homes in Royal Meath,
Mo bhron! mo bhron! how few!
Where peat-fires glowed, where laughter flowed,
Lies now the wintry dew.
O'er lonely plains the bodach reigns,
And Seaghan Buidhe flings his frown;
O joy for me, some hour to see
His blood-red star go down!

My love with the homes of Royal Meath!
With the woods where the birdeens call;
With the murmuring streams of the exile's dreams,
And the vales—God guard them all!
May He give to Eire's youth full soon
The power of hand and brain,
To wipe away from her breast for aye
The curse of the Saxon stain!

THE WORK OF GOD

THE smile that breaks upon our path
When all the world is drear,
When hope goes down 'neath Fortune's frown
And nought but woe seems near;
When from a grief-charged heart we sigh
For pleasant ways we've trod,
The smile from someone passing by—
That is the Work of God.

That word so softly, gently said,
That one wee word alone,
When joys that shone in days long gone
For evermore have flown;
When not a friend at all is nigh
To break the scourging rod,
That word from someone passing by—
That is the Work of God.

And oh! in every kindly deed
His holy Hand has part;
Each act we do to ease Life's rue
Makes glad His Sacred Heart:
Then let us labour—you and I—
As up the hill we plod,
To comfort someone passing by,
And share the work of God.

A MESSAGE O'ER THE SEA
(Air—"An Cnuicin Fraoigh.")

THE fields are fair in Eirinn, the birds are singing gaily,
But O, my heart is wailing for one beyond the sea;
For 'tis only you, a mhuirnin, can stay the silent burning,
Can ease the endless mourning, and set sorrow free.
Come to me, come home, love, o'er the dreary foam, love,
The brighter days shall dawn yet for you and for me;
My heart is always praying, my lips are always saying,
"God send you safe to Eirinn, a mhuirnin mo chroidhe!"

Since we parted, 'stoirin, that evening in the boithrin,
My days have all been lonely and sad for want of you;
The songs that used to cheer me, when world-worn and weary,
Come only in my dreaming, like a rose 'mid the rue.
Come to me, come home, love, o'er the dreary foam, love,
The brighter days shall dawn yet for you and for me;
My heart is always praying, my lips are always saying,
"God send you safe to Eirinn, a mhuirnin mo chroidhe!"

The birds are calling sweetly, the winds are bearing fleetly
A message o'er the sea-waves to you, a ghradh, from me:
To tell of hope unfading, of joys that we'll be sharing,
Of love that lives in Eirinn, and dear days to be.
Come to me, come home, love, o'er the dreary foam, love,
The brighter days shall dawn yet for you and for me;
My heart is always praying, my lips are always saying,
"God send you safe to Eirinn, a mhuirnin mo chroidhe!"

AT THE WELL OF CIARAN *(An Old Man's Musing.)*

HERE at the Well of Ciaran, I have bended my knees in prayer,
From the store of the Lord's rich graces I have asked for a tiny share;
I have walked in the holy places, by saintly footsteps trod,
I have drunk of the sparkling water, thrice-blest by a saint of God.

'Tis many a year in the counting, aye, many a long, long year,
Since first, in the dawn of boyhood, I knelt by the well-side here;
And, oh! for the kindly-hearted, who clustered around me then,
The hundreds of comely women, and high-minded homely men!

Dear God! I have seen them going, far over the wrathful sea,
Away from the land that bore them, 'till none was as poor as she;
'Till her eyes were dim with weeping, and her hands were weak and sore,
And her heart with waiting weary, and sick to its inmost core.

Glory to Him of the Glories! for the sunshine that follows the rain,
After long dark years of sorrow, there is joy in the land again;
And here to the Well of Ciaran the youths and maidens throng,
Their hearts bearing love for Eirinn, their faith in the future strong.

The Tongue of the Gaedheal, in triumph, is spreading through all the land,
Like a light thro' the darkness flashing, like a conqueror's quenchless brand.
It is sending through every bosom a thrill of delight and pride,
In custom and song and story, long scorned and long decried.

A Chiarain! O Patron holy, up there near the Throne of Light,
Obtain for the faithful toilers new strength in the noble fight.
When victory crowns their labours your name shall not pass away,
Your aid shall be well-remembered in the glory of Freedom's day.

TO ONE WHO WAS KIND

THINK of the singer thus, and thus alone,
When times have changed and long, long years have flown;
When storms, mayhap, have drowned his every song,
And round his life the shadows thickly throng.

When men have long forgotten all he sang,
And o'er his path the clouds of evening hang;
When, spent and worn, he walks a lonely way,
O, think of him the thoughts you think to-day.

'Tis as you think he is, he fain would be,
And if the faults and flaws you cannot see,
O, seek them not, your picture still retain—
When trust is full there's no regret or pain.

So, in the years to come, when shadows fall
To shatter youth's ideals and fancies all;
When sorrow reaps the dreams that joy had sown,
Think of the singer thus, and thus alone.

IRELAND'S FAITH

THEY crushed thee, Eire, and sacked thy altars,
And chained thy limbs—in their godless pride—
They slew thy people, and razed thy Temples,
And mocked thy love for the One Who died.

They plundered all; only one fair treasure
That the spoiler's hand could not break or steal—
'Twas *Faith*, unswerving, in God thy Saviour,
Thy heart within was its shrine and seal.

And still it shines, with a perfect brightness,
To guide thy feet o'er the lonely road
That winds away thro' the misty mountains,
And will end one day at the Lord's abode.

O guard it, Eire, and part it never.
They call thee poor, but thy wealth is great:
For 'twill win thee welcome, beyond all measure,
That day of days at the Golden Gate.

TO A LITTLE BIRD

GOD bless you in your singing, little bird.
(Never strain of it by hunger's hand be blurred);
God bless you in your singing,
Through the leafy woodland ringing,
Where the branches bend to meet it,
And the echoes all repeat it;
While I stand and gaze and listen,
And my eyes with tear-drops glisten,
And my soul cries out in rapture, though my tongue say no word:
"God bless you in your singing, little bird."

God bless you in your singing, little bird.
(Never strain of it by hunger's hand be blurred);
God bless you in your singing,
Note with note so deftly stringing;
Do you ever know that near you
Hearts in anguish come to hear you?
In your songs of pure elation
Finding hope and consolation,
Till at last they murmur softly, with a tear for every word:
"God bless you in your singing, little bird."

God bless you in your singing, little bird.
(Never strain of it by hunger's hand be blurred),
God bless you in your singing,
Souls to Him the nearer bringing
With the wondrous things you teach them
Where no other voice can reach them,
Where your hymn, so grandly swelling,
All unconsciously is telling
Of the blessed Home awaiting them—Eternal as His Word:
God bless you in your singing, little bird.

THE PARTING OF THE WAYS.

(To a friend about to join a Religious Order.)

FRIEND of my childhood, comrade unfailing and true,
Our pathways are drifting apart;
And my tongue cannot utter one-half of the wishes for you
That are thronging to-night in my heart.

We will travel no longer together thro' sunshine and haze,
As we've travelled for many a day;
We must follow the beckonings that lead us by far-severed ways,
Let our wishes be framed as they may.

God's Light on your choosing! Away from the folly and strife
That the world has for those it allures—
You will give all your genius, and all that is best in your life,
For the sake of the Love that endures.

May that Love, never fading, illumine your way to the end,
And I pray that one day we may meet
Where parting comes never, nor sorrow, nor trouble, old friend,
In the Light of God's Home, at His feet.

QUEEN OF THE IRISH MAY

FAIR on the hills of Eire the sun of the May-time glows;
Bright little laughing flowerets are peeping in all the dells;
There's joy in the flowing river, and joy in the breeze that blows
Thro' the waving woodland branches where the birdeens' chorus swells
'Tis surely a wondrous joy-time, Nature is one great song:
All through the balmy night-time and all thro' the gladsome day
This is what all the voices re-echo and pass along—
"Hail to thee, Mother Mary!—Queen of the Irish May."

In the homes of the peasant people, with a wealth of fresh wild flowers
To honour the spotless Virgin, an altar they fondly raise,
For she is their helper always, her love is their dower of dowers,
That gives them hope for the future years and light in the gloomy days.
Long do they kneel and praise her, unmindful of all their woes;
Their hearts are beyond all sorrow in the land that is far away.
From their souls to the Throne above them, this is the cry that goes—
"Pray for us, Mother Mary—Queen of the Irish May."

Poor do they name thee, Eire—Poor! with a Faith like thine!
Ah! little they know its value, those things of the earth who sneer.
Strive for the Land Eternal, where the lights of the Virgin shine;
Cheerless and sad and lonely is the lot of the exile here.
Love her and chant her praises—the scorn shall turn to shame;
Be faithful to God's own Mother, whatever the world may say.
Some day it will pass forever, an then 'twill be thine to claim
A place in the Home of Mary—Queen of the Irish May.

LITTLE GEMS

WHEN days are dark, when all the world is frowning,
When eyes grow dim and lose their joyous glow,
May little gems of Love your heart be crowning,
Consoling it and shielding it from woe.

May little gems of Hope from God descending
Be yours when Life's dark waves in anger roll,
And when, beyond the years, you reach the ending,
May little gems of Peace enshrine your soul.

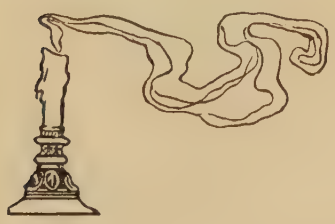
A STOIR MO CHROIDHE

(Fonn—"Bruach na Carraige Baine.")

A STOIR mo chroidhe! when you're far away
From the home that you'll soon be leaving;
'Tis many a time, thro' the night and day,
That your heart will be sorely grieving.
The strangers' land may be bright and fair,
And rich in its treasures golden;
But you'll pine, I know, for the long ago,
And the love that was never olden.

A stoir mo chroidhe! in the strangers' land
There is plenty of wealth, and wailing;
Where gems adorn the great and grand,
There are faces with hunger paling.
When the road is toilsome and hard to tread,
When the lights of their cities blind you,
O, turn, a stoir, to the Irish shore
And the ones that you leave behind you.

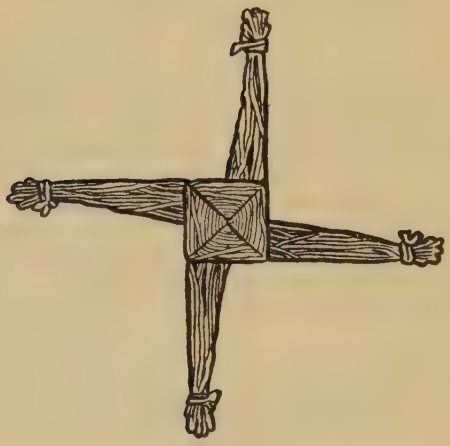
A stoir mo chroidhe! when the evening mist
O'er mountain and sea is falling,
Then turn away from the throng, and list,
And maybe you'll hear me calling—
For the sound of a voice that I'll sorely miss,
For somebody's quick returning;
A ruin, a ruin, O, come back soon
To the love that is always burning.



IN LIFE AND DEATH

BETTER to live in Eirinn than in any other land;
Her hearts are leal and generous, her winds are soft and bland;
Faith, Hope, and Love by every hearth like guardian angels stand—
Better to live in Eirinn than in any other land.

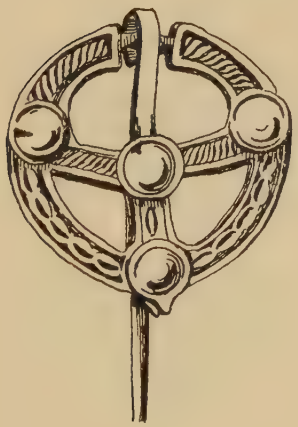
Better to die in Eirinn than in any other land—
A peaceful death or in the midst of some brave warrior band;
To sail upon a sea of prayer to God's eternal strand—
Better to die in Eirinn than in any other land!



SAYING THE ANGELUS

I MIND me well a glorious day,
Shadow and shine in the fields at play,
The little clouds over us, white and grey,
And the birds in the hedgerows singing;
Bared and bent was each toiler's head,
Holy and silent the moments fled,
And God alone heard what each one said
When the Angelus bell was ringing.

They are scattered now in the wide world's ways;
Gone are the olden, golden days;
One here in the city the Angelus says,
To far-away memories clinging.
God grant when the sun goes down the west,
When we turn from our toil and seek for rest,
We may meet in the only Land that's best
When His Angelus bells are ringing.



FOR EVERMORE

YOUR heart is filled with hopes and dreams
This morn, I know.
O, may the soft light of their beams
Ne'er wandering go;
But shyly, fondly linger near your path
And stretch before,
To light the shadows of the world's wrath
For evermore.

May Love and Hope for all time be
Your earthly share,
And may you walk, from sorrow free,
Through valleys fair,
Where birds of Peace, by God Himself inspired,
Their songs shall pour,
To soothe your soul when world-worn and tired,
For evermore.

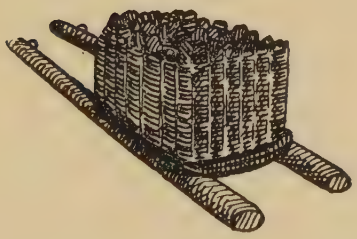
And may the warbling of their lays
In concord blend
With those you'll sing through all the days
Till comes the end,
When you shall travel down the sun-kissed hill
And reach the shore
Where clouds are never seen, where winds are still
For evermore.

FAREWELL TO GLEN NA MONA

FROM us all to-day you're going away, and there isn't a cloud in the sky,
Nor a frown at all on the smiling earth, nor even a breeze to sigh,
But there's many a tear that you can't see, and there's many a silent prayer
Going up to heaven and asking God that His blessing may be your share.

That every hour of the years to come may be filled with joy for you,
That no shadow of sorrow may ever fall on the heart that was always true,
That the smile we loved on your bonny face and the light of your laughing eyes
May never be dimmed by grief or care till the love that we bear you dies;

That the light of love be about your home and above the path you tread,
That the flowers of love be fresh and fair when the roses of June are dead;
That so it may be through all Life's day till the sun is sinking low,
Is the prayer that's going to God this morn for Purty Peggy O.



THE DEATHLESS DEAD

(Easter, 1916.)

GOD rest the brave and gallant dead
Who walked beside us in the fight,
With burning hearts and martial tread,
To strike for Ireland and the Right!

We saw them fall, we saw them lie
Upon the hard, unsheltered street;
Their caoine—the bullets whistling by,
Their funeral march—our tramping feet.

No mother's hand upon their brow,
No wife's fond kiss upon their cheek,
But in our hearts a silent vow,
The prayer our lips could scarcely speak.

'Tis good to think, in gloomy days
When thoughts of dark despair will rise,
Of those who walked the blood-stained ways
To meet their death, with glowing eyes!

'Tis good to think that Ireland's call
Can gather still the leal and brave,
For her to give their lives, their all,
And win—a soldier's nameless grave.

Some day a worthier pen than mine
Their tale of noble deeds shall tell—
In Ireland's heart their names shall shine;
God rest them all, God rest them well!

YOUR WISH

WHEN all is o'er, when all your work is done,
When God's bright beacon glows
Above the sadness of the setting sun,
We'll seek the spot you chose.

Beside the lake where often you have dreamed
Thro' golden, joyous hours,
'Till all the lonely world around you seemed
Aflame with laughing flowers!

Where tiny wavelets, singing, softly steal
To kiss the sleeping sward,
And gladly glide away, as if they feel
The joy of love's reward.

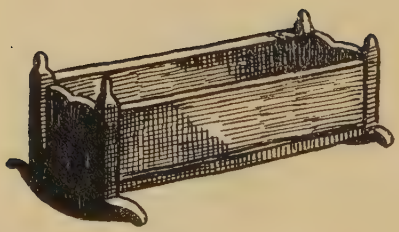
Where whisp'ring winds shall always o'er you croon,
And passing seem to say;
"Sleep on; we'll sing beside you here, a ruin,
Till dawns the destined Day."

Some hour (God grant it be in long, long years),
With silent, simple prayer,
With tender sigh and softly-flowing tears,
We'll lay you gently there.

AN IRISH MOTHER'S LOVE

WHEN all other loves have vanished,
When all other friendships fade,
There's a love that lives around us
In the sunshine and the shade;
Never changing, never faltering,
Never weary, though we rove,
Tried and true, and ne'er found wanting—
'Tis an Irish mother's love.

Keep it, prize it, and deserve it
Thro' the ever-lengthening years;
You will know its value never
Till you wet her grave with tears;
Then you'll say, "I've lost a treasure
Next in worth to Heaven above,
And I prized it all too little—
'Twas an Irish mother's love!"



A MESSAGE TO MAIRIN

[To a cailin in an Irish convent school, whose companions had tried to induce her to drop the study of Irish, and to devote her energies to French or German instead. Written in 1901.]

A Mhairin, a leinbh, don't heed them,
Let them go with their foreign speech;
Let them use all their arts of persuasion,
Let them blarney and wheedle and preach;
Let them talk 'till they weary of talking,
Let them chide, and cajole, and caress—
But cling to the language of Eireann,
Don't prize it or value it less.

When they sneer at you, 'Mhairin a leinbh,
Just smile, for the shame is their own,
Who, for sake of the speech of the alien,
Would leave Ireland's language alone;
When they talk of their French or their German,
Just hear them, and bid them depart;
But cherish the tongue of your fathers,
That lives in each throb of your heart.

Some day, when you're older, a leinbh,
You'll remember this battle with pride,
When the shame-blush shall mount to the faces
Of those who now scoff and deride;
So cling to it, fight for it, 'Mhairin,
'Tis as pure and as sweet as your name,
'Tis as rich as the love of your young heart,
'Tis *your own*—without shadow of shame!

"GLORY BE TO GOD"

GLORY be to God !—
'Twas a poor old woman's prayer
But it soared, I am sure, to the Throne above,
And was honoured and welcomed there.
From morning's dawn 'till the night came down,
Thro' each and thro' every day,
No matter what came, be it gloom or joy,
Those words she would softly say.

"Glory be to God !"—
When her boy left home behind,
To climb the hills of the stranger's land,
And to combat the ocean wind.
She watched with a lonely heart his form,
Till it went o'er the mountain's rim,
Then raised her soul to the Lord of all,
And breathed her prayer to Him.

"Glory be to God !"
When her bright little cailin died,
She closed up grief in her mother's breast,
Nor murmured, nor wailed, nor cried.
But that prayer went forth with the pure young life,
To guide it along the path
Which leads to the glory that ne'er shall die,
And the Love that no mortal hath.

"Glory be to God !"—
Those were the words she said,
When down one day on her bending form
The mantle of Death was laid.
And the smile that beamed in the closing eyes,
And that lighted the worn face,
Told the silent tale, that in God's fair home
Her soul had received a place.

EIRE IN THE MAY

O 'TIS grand to be in Eirinn when the May is o'er the land,
When the fields are green with verdure, and the crooning breezes blow;
When the trees, like leafy giants, in their teeming splendour stand
By the rugged, winding laneways and the roadsides, row by row;
The little birdeens, warbling in the wood and through the glen,
Seem to pour their very hearts out in a sweet, inspiring lay
That lights the lives of children and that haunts the minds of men—
Ah! 'tis grand to be in Eirinn in the May!

There are shy, wee flowers peeping by each little, winding stream,
Thro' the dewy, waving meadows, on the hillsides proud and high,
With a fragrance like the memory of a sorrow-shaded dream
That changes all our gladness to a soft and tender sigh;
The blackbird calls at eventide from out the hedgerow's shade,
'Mong hawthorn sprays, like angel hands, so lily-white are they;
Who that ever yet has heard that song could let its memory fade?
Ah! 'tis grand to be in Eirinn in the May!

Some leave behind the Maytime, and the blackbird's cheery call,
The fragrant-scented flowers twining round the ruins old;
They leave the loving people, and the childhood scenes, and all,
For the hope of foreign fortune, for the lure of foreign gold!
And when He who gave them Eire bids them, like the flowerets, die,
And return to dust and ashes in the strange lands far away,
Then their hearts will throb with anguish, as they murmur, with a sigh:
"Ah! 'twere sweet to die in Eirinn in the May!"

But there's hope for Eire breathing in the breezes' fairy rune,
As they whisper thro' the hedgerow's sheen, and lull the birds to rest;
There are gladsome voices singing thro' their soft, melodious croon,
As they wander o'er the meadow-lands in May-time beauty dressed;
And they say, "Old Land, take courage! tho' the faithless wing their flight,
There are loving hearts who yet await the 'dawning of the day';
They will keep the old flag flying, they will fight the olden fight,
Till thy hills are crowned with freedom in the May!"

THE DREAMER

[*"John Boyle O'Reilly, Champion, Poet, Orator; a true, loving, noble Gaedheal. He suffered persecution from the Preachan Mor (England) for the sake of Ireland. He expected, always, in his heart, to be buried in this exact spot, among the hills and the plains where he was reared, and to which he gave his heart's love. O God! give eternal rest to his soul, for he increased the fame of his country."—Translation of the Irish inscription on the Boyle O'Reilly monument in Dowth Churchyard.*]

"CHAMPION, Orator, Poet, Gaedheal!"
And they called him "a foolish dreamer!"
Thank God! there is minding in Innisfail
For those who would fain redeem her
From the withering curse of the Preachan Mor,
Whose wings have been drawn around her,
Whose claws have wounded her, deep and sore,
Whose chains like a slave have bound her.

'Twas the wish of his heart that his bones might rest
In the soil of the land that bore him,
With the shamrocks twining above his breast
And the ceol sidhe crooning o'er him;
Alas! for his dreaming—'twas God's decree
That he and his love be parted—
That she should gaze o'er the bounding sea,
Towards the grave of the noble-hearted.

Woes he endured from the Preachan Mor,
For the sake of his grief-bowed Mother;
The blood of his breast he would freely pour
To free her—like many another:
And O! she will think, on her Freedom Day,
Of that brave heart's pure devotion,
And will gratefully turn her eyes away
To his grave, o'er the pulsing ocean.

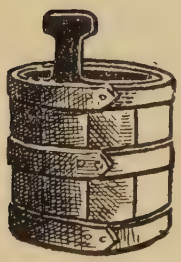
O God! let his soul to Thy Fold be drawn,
In the Halls of Eternal Dreaming,
Where the souls that have battled for Freedom's dawn,
Like fadeless jewels are gleaming:
And give to his native land, O Lord!—
(Laid low by the strangers' spoiling),
For the woes she has borne—a just reward—
The fruits of her children's toiling!

TO-DAY

BLUE skies over us smiling, clear, and fair, and kind;
The silent hills around us, a kiss in the whispering wind;
The crooning sea beside us: O, whate'er the years betide us,
'Tis a glorious thing to be living on God's fair earth to-day!

Here in the sunshine dreaming, the wavelets near our feet,
Where they come, with a gladsome murmur, the lonely rocks to greet,
The world may praise or blame us, or fools or dreamers name us,
We only think of the beauty of God's fair earth to-day.

In the years that are out before us our dreams may fade and die,
When the hills look high and dreary, and the clouds loom up in the sky;
But one thing sweet in recalling, when the pitiless gloom is falling,
Shall be the thought of the beauty of God's fair earth to-day.



THE HEARTH OF HOME

THE hearth of home! the hearth of home!
Where things are as they seem,
Where simple, kindly neighbours come,
Where love-lights always beam;
Where sinless laugh and jest fly round,
Where smiles are Pleasure's own;
Ah! there is gladness to be found
In thoughts of it alone.

The hearth of home! the hearth of home!
Too soon its tenants fly
To plough the world's enticing loam,
To earn the tear and sigh;
When days are dark, when shadows fall,
Enfolding heart and mind,
'Tis then the wandering ones recall
The joys they've left behind.

The hearth of home! the hearth of home!
The hapless exile sees
Full many a hall and towering dome,
And memory loses these;
But while o'er half the earth he strays,
Thro' cities, hills, and plains,
In every dream of bygone days
The hearth of home remains.

A CRY FROM THE CROWD

I LOVE not the sound of the rushing throng,
Nor the dust of the crowded street,
But I long for the fields, and the thrush's song,
With its crooning, soft and sweet;
I long for the peaceful evening hours,
When the day and the night-time blend,
When the dew comes down o'er the wee, bright flowers,
And the fern-tops sway and bend.

When the gorse shines red on the distant hills,
All aflame in the sunset's glow,
And the wind—like the murmur of far-off mills—
Thro' the trees floats to and fro;
When the birdeens droop their weary heads,
And away to their cloisters creep,
And sink to rest in their leaf-lined beds,
Where the stars shall watch their sleep.

When the old people sit by the open door,
And talk of the golden past,
And exchange—low-toned—their tales of yore,
When care to the winds was cast;
When the forms were straight that are bending now,
And the hair that is scant and grey,
Was clustering dark on each smooth, soft brow
That holds many a seam to-day.

When the men come in by the old boreen
From the meadow-lands down below,
And pass where the leaves of the poplar lean
On the hawthorn's breast of snow;
Ah! 'tis then I would go from the crowded ways,
Where Sin makes a mighty claim,
And fly to the homes where the love-light stays,
And where people revere God's Name.

'MONG THE HILLS OF EIREANN

Suggested by reading a letter in which an American lady expressed a wish that she might find a resting-place "among the hills of Eireann," which she had visited and had learned to love)

AWAY from the grandeur of foreign cities,
I know you'd like to be back again,
Wandering over the hills of Eireann,
In the warm sunshine and soothing rain;
With the fairy breezes around you floating,
And the heath aflame with a purple glow,
And the thrushes singing "Ceud mile failte,
Wherever in Eirinn you wish to go."

Ah! who has gazed on the hills of Eireann,
Her misty valleys and boglands brown,
Her lakes, where there's so much peace and beauty
That you'd search in vain for an angry frown,
Without holding deep in the heart forever
The image of all that the eye has seen—
The murmuring streams and winding boreens,
And the woods with their mantle of emerald sheen!

Away from the grandeur of foreign cities
You'd like to come when your life is o'er;
You'd wish to be borne across the waters
That kiss the sands on the Irish shore;
You'd long for a grave 'mong the hills of Eireann,
With shamrocks wreathing above you there,
And with kindly hearts, for your peaceful sleeping,
To offer in silence a fervent prayer.

We'll give you a spot 'mong the hills of Eireann
Wherever you'd wish to be laid at rest;
Where the sunlight falls over old Sliabh Chullain
We'll fashion a green-clothed, peaceful nest.
Or, mayhap, you'd rather have stately Tara,
With its kings and druids of days long gone!?
Or close to the foot of the towering Galtees,
Away in "the valley near Sliabh na mBan"?

For that same wish, may the angels guard you,
And watch beside you by night and day;
And may it be long till you think of sleeping
In foreign tomb or in Irish clay!
But come and live where the hills of Eireann
Look out for ever across the sea:
She'll clasp your hand, and she'll cry in greeting:
"Ceud mile failte! a stoir mo chroidhe!"

TO YOU

IN the shadows of the night,
In the shy, pale dawn,
When the sun is high and bright,
Or its rays long-drawn,
Every moment, sad or gay,
All the long day through,
Thoughts of mine for ever stray
Back again to you.

Thro' the clouds that o'er me loom
Your sweet smiles glow,
And your voice amid the gloom
Seems to whisper low,
Words of solace and of peace,
Sorrow-healing words, and true,
That enjoy eternal lease
In the heart of you.

There's a bright and golden dream
Lighting every hour,
Like the murmur of a stream,
Or a perfumed flower;
'Tis the thought of joys to come,
Of a crown for Roisin Dubh,
Of a peaceful, happy home,
And the love of you.

GOD DOES NOT FORGET

THE world will strip your failings,
And hide the good you do,
And with its sharpest thorns
The ways you walk bestrew;
You'll toil for men: they'll curse you—
'Twas thus, and thus 'tis yet,
And thus 'twill be forever,
But God does not forget.

The hours of silent grieving,
For some one loved and lost,
The hours of self-denial,
('Twere hard to count their cost)
The falling soul uplifted,
The sorrows bravely met,
All are on earth forgotten—
But God does not forget.

His eye is ever seeking
The "wee things" done for Him,
And they shall light the shadows
Where Death waits, stern and grim;
So, lift your burden gladly,
Nor falter, fear, nor fret,
For Heaven is in the distance,
And God does not forget.

IRELAND'S MAY

(Written a week before Easter, 1916.)

THE May dawn is breaking over Ireland.
God grant it be the long, unclouded May
That her undaunted heart has prayed and yearned for
Through many a dark and many a dreary day.

God grant it be the opening of her Summer,
When all her dreams shall blossom fair again,
When pipe and harp shall sound her Song of Freedom
And send it ringing over hill and glen.

O, comrades in the holy cause of Ireland,
The last hill in our long march greets us now,
And on its crest the winds shall sing our death-song,
Or we shall crown with joy our Mother's brow.

March on! the path is rough, but God is with us,
God's Mother smiles from Heaven to light the way;
The memory of our martyred dead shall aid us
To win the joy of Ireland's cloudless May!

ST. FRANCIS TO THE BIRDS

SING, O my little brothers,
The praise of the gracious King
Who blest you with glorious music,
Who gave you the soaring wing,

Who gave you the summer sunshine,
The perfume of tender flowers,
And the shelter of leaves and grasses
In the silent, sleep-filled hours,

Who gave you a cloak for winter
And a nest in the joyous spring,
Rich stores in the fruitful autumn—
Sing, O my brothers, sing!

Go forth to each open highway,
Go forth to each wood and glen,
And sing of the kind Creator
To the heedless hearts of men.

THE HILL O' THE ROAD

AT the Hill o' the Road in the long ago,
When the dawn o'er the hills was creeping,
When the sickles that stretched from the sun's first glow
The shades and the dews were reaping;
When the birdeens, fresh from their cosy beds,
A hymn to the Lord were raising,
For the shelter and rest of their weary heads
His Mercy and Might appraising.

At the Hill o' the Road when the Angelus bell
O'er the fields from afar was tolling,
And hearts enwrapped in its mystic spell
Found comfort and sweet consoling;
When heads were bared in the evening air,
And faces were bended lowly,
While lips recited the wondrous prayer
In praise of the Virgin holy.

At the Hill o' the Road in the long ago,
When the day's hard toil was ended,
And the streamlet's murmur, sweet and low,
With the blackbird's piping blended;
When children's voices floated far,
Like bells of a convent chiming;
And old people saw, like a golden star,
The day of *their* childhood's rhyming.

At the Hill o' the Road on a bonfire night
(Ah, me! for the breezes crooning!)
When the nimble feet in the flickering light
Kept time to the fiddler's tuning;
When someone, haunted by memories dear—
In the midst of the gladsome-hearted—
Would shed in silence a scalding tear
For sake of the days departed.

O'er the Hill o' the Road there's a cloud of woe,
But where are the kindly faces?
Ah! some look back towards the long ago
From foreign, unfriendly places;
Some have walked the Eternal Way,
And some, with hopes high burning,
Are waiting here for the dawning day,
And the exiles home returning!

GOD BLESS YOU

GOD bless you, a chara, God bless you !
And keep you from grief and pain;
May the breezes of Heaven caress you,
And the sun, and the kindly rain;
May every hour be wreathing
New joys for your heart's delight,
Is the wish that my soul is breathing,
And the prayer that I pray to-night.

May the birdeens of Love be singing
The songs that will please your ear,
May the flowers of Love be springing
Around you, through every year;
May the road that is out before you,
Be pleasant, and smooth, and white,
May never a cloud hang o'er you,
Is the prayer that I pray to-night.

May you never know sorrow or sighing,
May you never know care or woe,
May gladness be always flying
To meet you, wherever you go !
May peace to your heart be flowing,
From God, like a stream of light,
Is the wish from my heart that's going,
And the prayer that I pray to-night.

OUT ON THE BOG

A Cheannabhain ! out on the bogland swaying,
Where winds are playing, sweet-voiced and glad,
O ! list awhile to the words I'm saying,
And share the woes of a lonely lad,
Whose heart is wild with a fruitless mourning
For hopes that filled it at early morn,
But faded away ere the sunset's burning
Had cast a flame o'er the rustling corn.

A Cheannabhain dhilis ! oft in my dreaming
'Neath the cheerless beaming of Folly's light,
I've seen you here, in the moonlight gleaming,
Like an angel vision, so pure and bright;
And here I've come, after all my strolling
'Mong the gorgeous beauties of hall and mart,
To refresh my soul with the winds carolling,
And to tell you the tale of an aching heart.

A Cheannabhain ! far in the noisy cities,
Where no one pities, I strayed—unknown;
When halls resounded with loveless ditties
I sang my song of the bogs—alone.
I sought for Fame, but 'twas vain my seeking;
I sought for Love, and 'twas scorn that came;
The joys of the world passed by, unspeaking,
And dreams are all that I've left to claim.

A Cheannabhain dhilis ! you'll share my sighing
When birds are crying along the night;
I'll wander here when the dews are lying
Like fairy gems on your mantle white;
I'll wander here, and we'll stand together
On the soft, brown bogland, side by side,
And I'll find at last, 'mid the waving heather,
That peace which the great, big world denied.

TWO LITTLE HARPISTS

LIKE evening winds thro' orchard blossoms stealing,
On softly-moving, tender-rustling wings;
Like wintry blasts across the moorland sweeping;
These sounds that came when childhood touched the strings.

A host of long-unheeded, hidden memories
Sprang up afresh in many a bosom there,
And eyes looked out o'er valleys far-extending,
Where every flower of fancy claimed a share.

And ears were filled with sounds long lost and silent—
A father's voice, a mother's lullaby;
A brother's or a sister's song of gladness—
These things that fade awhile but never die.

The thrush's song came crooning o'er the meadow,
And travelled down the shaded boreen-way;
The lark poured out a joyous hymn of freedom;
The ceol sidhe sobbed and moaned above the brae.

And thoughts came thronging, too, of days in Eirinn,
Far back beyond the mist of strife and hate,
When careless wandering poet and tuneful harper
Found greetings warm at every chieftain's gate.

The music swelled—and died; those tiny fingers
Had searched our hearts and set their prisoners free—
The dreams of all that lies within the future,
The hopes for times in Eirinn yet to be.

O, cailin of the shining, golden tresses!
I'd travel many a mile to hear you play
Once more, like birdeens' songs at early morn,
The lilting strains of "Fainne geal an lae."

And little cailin dubh! your soul was breathing
In every note that spoke at your command,
While we have such as you to wake its numbers
The harp shall ne'er forsake the Irish land.

May God pour down His gifts in rich abundance
To crown the raven locks and waves of gold,
And may the power to raise our hearts from slumber
Be every day increased a thousandfold!

TO IRELAND (1900)

RAISE up to-day thy heart, old Land,
And praise the Lord above,
That by His all-sustaining Hand,
And in His bounteous love,
Has helped thee guard thy fame and faith
While swept the dread simoon
Of Hate and Greed, of Blood and Death,
Across thy breast, a ruin!

Dark was thy night and sad thy fate,
And heavy was thy woe;
Seven hundred years of vengeful hate
Have left thee lone and low;
Yet as thro' darkest clouds of night
Gleams out the friendly moon,
In spite of all their force and might,
Thy faith has shone, a ruin.

They tore the crown from off thy brow—
Those creatures basely born—
They robbed thee of thy wealth, and now
They'd hold thee up to scorn;
They think to serve the godless crew
Should be thy greatest boon;
Their days of power o'er thee are few—
Thy day has come, a ruin.

The Power that rules o'er weak and strong
Has watched thy suffering well,
Has seen thee fight thro' ages long
While nations rose and fell;
For Him, thro' all the changing years,
Thy soul has lived, and soon
His Hand shall dry thy burning tears,
And raise thee up, a ruin.

Thy sons have slept but now they wake,
They're battling all for thee!
Above thy night the dawn-beams break
That yet shall see thee free;
Then raise thy heart, old Land, to-day,
Thy harps breathe Victory's tune,
And all the breezes seem to say—
"Thou'lt soon be free, a ruin."

DREAMS OF LONG AGO

HE is sitting near the hedgerow, like a spectre in the gloaming,
There is silence all about him, for the birdeens are asleep;
And his wistful, dreamy gaze across the meadowland is roaming,
Where the flowerets hide their charms, and the grasses bend and weep;
Lie the snows of eighty winters on that form, so slight and drooping,
That once bid Old Time defiance, in its manhood's lurid glow;
At the call of tender Memory, softly, swiftly round him trooping,
Come the thoughts of days departed, and the dreams of long ago.

Every little wish he nurtured in the early cloudless morning,
Every joyous ray of sunshine that across his pathway fell;
Every shade that followed after, with a lesson and a warning,
All are gathered now around him, and he feels their old time spell;
They whisper to him gently, like the evening wind, soft-breathing,
"We have travelled with you ever, thro' the weal and thro' the woe;
Do you love us as you loved us, when the bays of youth were wreathing?
Have you any word of welcome for the dreams of long ago?"

Thus he answers—half in musing—and his voice is low and broken;
Like the murmur of the breezes, singing softly o'er his head:
"Ye are now my only treasure, for I hold no other token
Of the ones who loved and left me and are sleeping with the dead:
Scores of years have drifted past me since I first beheld your faces;
I have reached the Land of Twilight, where the winds of Memory blow;
On my bowed and shrunken form Time has deeply left his traces;
I have now no loves but Heaven—and the dreams of long ago.

"Friends of boyhood! ye have cheered me in my darkest hour of sorrow,
When the piercing thorns of suffering left their marks upon my brow;
I loved ye in Life's morning, when I thought of no to-morrow,
But my love has never burned half so pure or true as now;
I have wandered past the noonday, evening shades are fast descending,
And the waves of seas eternal pass beside me to and fro;
There are voices calling, calling—and I know 'tis near the ending;
Come beside me, closer, closer, tender dreams of long ago."

He is sitting near the hedgerow, and the grasses still are weeping
In the meadows out beyond him—and the night is falling fast;
The spirit-friends of boyhood keep a vigil o'er his sleeping,
They have promised to be with him when the journey ends at last;

Let our voices not disturb him, let us leave him as we found him—
Waiting by the tide eternal, with its ceaseless ebb and flow—
Kindly summer skies above him, hope and holy peace around him;
Loving only God and Heaven and the dreams of long ago!

TO MYSELF

MAY darkness depart from your days,
And doubting and fear:
Is the prayer that my heart for you prays
Every day of the year.

For all God has sent may your heart
In gratitude sing;
Towards Him may your thoughts ever start
On high-soaring wing.

In the grief and the gloom of the years,
When sorrow shall come,
May faith ever sweeten your tears,
Though comfort be numb.

No wish and no prayer do I breathe
For gold or for fame;
Full often the conqueror's wreath
Is woven from shame.

Full often the beautiful gold—
So precious, so prized—
Tells only that trust has been sold
And friendship despised.

Your fame be to ne'er leave a thorn
On paths you have trod;
Your gold be the peace that is born
Of friendship with God

May darkness depart from your days,
And doubting and fear;
Is the prayer that my heart for you prays
Every day of the year.

THE BLESSING OF ST. FRANCIS

I DO not wish you wealth to-day, nor power to sway a nation;
I do not wish you all the joy that fame and rank impart,
But I send to you the greeting of St. Francis of Assisi:
The peace of God be reigning in the kingdom of your heart.

The peace of God be with you from the dawning of the morn,
Through the bustle of the noonday, to the evening's dying light;
The peace of God be with you on the daily rounds of duty,
The peace of God be with you in the silence of the night.

Though grief and care may fling their frown, the peace of God
be near you,
To comfort you and help you bear the burthen of your load
Along the upward ways you walk; and then when life is over,
The peace of God be with you at the ending of the road.

ONLY A FOREIGN GRAVE

'TIS only a grave in a far-off land,
Amid towering maples tall,
Where no shamrocks grow on the grassy sod,
And no sorrowing tear-drops fall;
No murmured prayer for the fair young dead
Floats soft on the evening air;
'Tis only a grave in the cold strange earth—
And a broken heart lies there.

But, ah! there are tears in another land,
Where that form, now lifeless, played—
As fair, as free, and as careless then
As the flowers 'mong which she strayed!
There are mourning hearts in a peasant home,
'Neath the cloud-clad Irish sky,
For the one who fled from her native isle,
In the strangers' land to die.

They think of her now as she lisped her prayers
In the twilight long ago,
Or sang the songs of the Gaelic race
In a voice that was sweet and low;
And they cry "A stoir! if 'twere only here,
In the little churchyard green,
But your grave is far from the Irish land,
And the dark sea lies between!"

Poor Eire! when will thy mourning cease
For the hapless ones who go,
With dreams that, alas! too often end
In a dismal tale of woe?
Oh, Irish girls! ere ye list again
To stories of golden store,
Remember the lonely, broken heart
In that grave on a foreign shore!

GOD KNOWS BEST

THERE are times when the world grows dark and cold,
When sorrow makes our life-path bleak,
When we look in vain for the smile of old,
And we miss the voice that has ceased to speak.
Oh ! then let us turn our thoughts towards Him
Whose Name is solace, and peace, and rest;
Let us say, when the care-cup is filled to the brim,
"'Tis hard to bear it, but God knows best."

There are times when the hopes that we cherished fade,
And pass like vapour before our gaze,
When the lovely visions our fancies made
Float from us into the mist and maze:
When the idols our hearts created fall,
And instead of a kind word we hear a jest;
O ! in those times let us welcome all—
'Tis God's allotting, and God knows best.

There are times when the ones we love break trust,
And shatter the faith that was warm and strong;
Where the gold was shining we see the dust—
Where we sought for honour we find but wrong.
O, remember ! life is not one fair dream
To put forth its charms at our behest;
Let us pardon the shadow and bless the beam,
For God has sent them, and God knows best.

Let us welcome all, be it dark or bright,
Be it light or heavy, for sake of Him,
Tho' around us may gather the clouds of night,
And the path before us be drear and dim;
And when some day when it all is o'er,
When life's sun shall droop towards the kindly west,
When we leave the earth with its rush and roar,
The world may blame us, but He'll know best.

A LITTLE SERMON

BETTER a word that is kindly spoken—
Even one little word—than wealth untold;
Never forget that a heart nigh broken
Sighs for affection and not for gold.
Find out the ones that are travel-weary,
Ones that have failed in the earthly strife,
Reach them a hand where the road is dreary—
Then you will find that there's joy in life.

A WISH

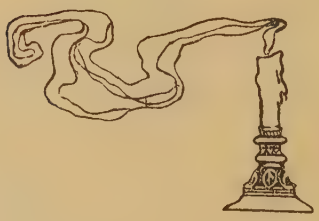
SOME days must be dark and dreary,
Some clouds in the sky must rise;
Some hearts must be sad and weary,
And tears must bedim some eyes.

God guard you against all sorrow,
Wherever your footsteps roam;
'Till at last, on the glorious Morrow,
He leads you to Him and Home.

MOTHER, a mhuirnin! I'm here by the side o' you,
Holdin' your poor, worn hand in my own,
Watchin' the face that had always the smile for me,
And the eyes that will soon close forever, mo bhron!
'Tisn't the fairies at all that are in it,
But angels of God who will loosen your chains,
An' lead you away to that Land of your dreamin',
Where all men are equal an' no one complains.

To the bright Tir na nOg in the star-lighted heavens,
Where flowers never fade, an' where joy never dies;
An' God will be there, an' His Mother 'll welcome you;
Home to the fold of the holy and wise.
'Tis I will be lonely, a mhuirnin, without you.
The friends that will come may be loyal and true,
But ne'er thro' the years that are stretchin' before me
Shall I find one as tender an' gentle as you.

Don't fear for the Mother you've placed in my keepin'—
My hand shall be hers, an' my brain an' my heart;
'Till Connor goes down 'neath the soft wavin' grasses,
His thoughts from dear Eirinn shall never depart.
An', a stoir! when you kneel at the White Throne of Heaven,
An' God listens there for the tale that you'll tell;
With the Queen of all queens, and the angels around you,
In your prayers for your boy, think of Eirinn as well.



A SONG OF CLARE

THERE is freedom in Clare,
Where the waves thunder in from the far-stretching spaces,
And men have the strength of the sea in their faces,
Where the hills look out proudly across the broad ocean
And tell of a love, of a deathless devotion
That force cannot kill and that wiles cannot weaken,
For Faith is its cradle and God is its beacon
O, the waves shall have ebbed far away from Ceann Leime
Ere Clare or its people prove faithless to Eire.
There is freedom in Clare.

There are memories in Clare
Of high-hearted courage and noble endeavour,
Of deeds that will live by its firesides for ever,
Of foray and fray, and of nights that were merry
When our laughter swept over the Shannon to Kerry;
Of days when the Saxon was fleeing before us,
Of years with the dark cloud of thraldom still o'er us,
Of comrades who fell when the old flag was flying,
And bade us be true with their last breath when dying.
There are memories in Clare.

There is sorrow in Clare
For the ones who went out from its homes in the morning—
The world and its wiles and its hate for them scorning;
The ones who are far in the lands of the stranger,
With strife ever near them, and suffering and danger;
The ones who went out with the hope of returning,
And who dream of their own land with hearts full of yearning,
And whose cry rises up from the millions uncaring,
And rides on the waves racing westwards to Eirinn:
"Ah, God be with Clare!"

OH, give me the joy of heart
To laugh at the ills of Life—
At the cruel words that smart,
At the folly of human strife;
To lighten a neighbour's care,
To brighten a brother's woe,
To see where the sky is fair
When clouds are bending low.

Oh, give me the gift of health
To strive in a noble cause,
And the stream of the world's wealth
May flow to the miser's paws;
Give me the strength to toil,
Give me the voice to plead
For a grave in the Irish soil,
When the Irish Land is freed.

Oh, give me the generous love
Of children pure and young,
That reaches from Heaven above
To hearts with grief o'erhung;
There is wealth in the heaving seas,
The earth has gold and kine,
But it's little I'd care for these
If the things that I ask were mine.

AN IRISH MOTHER'S KNEE

" The greatest of all Irish Schools is an Irish Mother's knee."—

MAIRE DE BUITLEIR.

THROUGHOUT the land of Eireann stand the stranger's halls of learning,
Where minds are trained for combat with the sweeping storms of life,
Where skilful hands are buckling on the strong defensive armour
That will bring the youthful battlers all-triumphant thro' the strife.

But all their arts of teaching, and all their stores of knowledge,
Cannot raise to strength the blossom that has fallen from the tree:
The lesson of all lessons is the one that's learned in childhood,
And the greatest school in Eirinn is an Irish mother's knee.

O, the college halls are stately, and those books are mines of learning,
And the flowers that men call culture, rich in perfume, flourish there;
Grand old volumes, treasure-laden from the rich fields of the Ages,
Travel slowly to its portals, weary 'neath the load they bear.

Yet, for all, there's something higher than the wisdom of the masters;
There's a power far above them, great and learned tho' they be:
You will find it by the hearthstone, near the bogland and the mountain;
'Tis the knowledge given in childhood on an Irish mother's knee.

See a simple-hearted peasant girl, a flower from Eire's garden,
Forced by fate, or lured by folly, to a land beyond the seas,
Where the strangers frown upon her, and the foulsome breath of cities
Breaks the spirit, once as buoyant as her native mountain breeze.

What sustains her in the conflict, when destruction strives to claim her,
When the dark clouds gather round her, and the hope-lights fade and flee ?
Oh ! there's something unforgotten, something never lost or broken:
'Tis the Faith she found in childhood, on an Irish mother's knee.

Here, again, we see two pictures—one a man with honours laden,
From the stranger's halls of learning—on the sweets of culture fed,
Of Irish birth, but false to Eire, with the slaveling's word of scorn
For the land that nursed his fathers, and that gave their dust a bed.

And the other—never college walls enclosed that manly form,
He has roamed the giant mountains that are sleeping by the sea;
In the language of his country he can trace his country's story,
For he learned it thus in childhood by an Irish mother's knee.

Aye, the stranger's halls have charms for a vain and foolish people,
Taught to ape the airs and customs of a cold, unfeeling race,
That would rob our country's life-blood, that has naught for her but hatred,
That has left the deep wounds on her form, the tear-drops on her face.

But to raise, erect and noble, in the hearts of Eire's children
The lofty aspirations, and the feeling of the free,
To teach them changeless love of God, of manhood and of freedom,
The *only* school in Eirinn is an Irish mother's knee.

VOICES OF THE PAST

THEY come across the dreary waste,
Where all our hopes lie dead,
Where all the myths our fancies chas'd
Before our gaze have fled,
Where all the dreams of by-gone times
In mute array are massed;
They come to us like evening chimes,
The Voices of the Past.

They rise above the city's din,
They fill the festive hall,
They bear us back by ford and glynn,
And hold our hearts in thrall;
They lead us back o'er Memory's slope—
By many a cloud o'ercast—
To youth, and strength, and joy, and hope,
The Voices of the Past.

They mingle with the evening breeze,
When peace is o'er the land,
They bound across the restless seas,
To greet us on the strand;
They speak to us thro' some old song,
Till tears are falling fast,
On music waves they float along,
The Voices of the Past.

God bless them all! God bless them all!
They lighten sorrow's load,
They cheer our hearts when shadows fall
Along Life's thorny road;
And when we go to seek the dead
Beyond the grave at last,
O, may they tell us where to tread,
The Voices of the Past.

A MEATHIAN SHRINE

(Kilskyre.)

FAR back in the long-vanished ages
A child of the noble and great
Fled far from the halls of rejoicing,
And far from her queenly estate.
And she came where a Meathian lowland
In a mantle of silence was dressed;
She gazed on the beauty around her,
Then said: "In your midst will I rest."

And soon was upraised from the valley
A cloister, a school, and a shrine;
And pilgrims came there o'er the ocean
From the lands of the Seine and the Rhine.
And Scire the Good gave them blessings
And welcomes a thousand times o'er,
For they sought in the language of Eire
A share of her faith and her lore.

'Twas fair; till the Danish invader
Swept down with his fire and his sword;
To loot and to burn was his glory,
And Greed was the god he adored.
Laid low were the walls of Cill-Scire;
The weak ones were slain by the strong;
But their loved one, their guardian, their mother,
Was spared to remember the wrong.

Once more did the school and the cloister
Uprise from the ashes of years,
Once more came a ruthless despoiler,
Unmindful of prayers and of tears;
And the woundings of grim desolation
Were laid on that fair valley's face,
But out from it all flashed triumphant
The Faith which no hand can erase.

O, Scire! our Patron, our Mother,
Remember thy children, and pray
That the Faith which no torture could weaken
May never bend low to decay;
That its lustre may cheer us and guide us,
That our toil in the future may be
For the honour of down-trodden Eire,
For the glory of God—and for thee.

THE MOUNTAIN ALTAR

AROUND it the furze-clad hills arise
Like guardians strong and brave,
As if from the world's unfeeling hand
Its story to shield and save.
And they'll guard it there with a kingly pride,
Tho' the skies may smile or weep,
Those brave old hills with a tender care
Their vigil of love will keep.

The ivy clings to the moss-grown stones
With a loving, unchanging clasp,
As if to shelter the friend of its youth
From the plunderer's ruthless grasp;
And it weaves a canopy overhead,
Where the breeze in summer sighs,
And the tender raindrops filter thro',
Like tears from the weeping skies.

When our Faith was banned by a tyrant law,
And our Altars in ruin lay:
When the blighting gloom of the Penal night
Fell dark over Freedom's day,
On this ledge the Sacred Host was laid,
And the hunted Sagart here
Offered up to Heaven the holy Mass,
While the hounds of the law were near.

There has it stood thro' the changing years
Unstirred by the howling gale;
Unbending, stern, and dark, and proud,
Like a knight in his kingly mail;
Around it the wintry winds have swept,
And the croon of the summer breeze
Has often rustled its ivied robe:
But 'tis little it cares for these.

It has conquered all that would crush it down
In the reckless flight of years,
Since first the moss on the soft, green sod
Was moistened with sorrowing tears
For the home destroyed and the Altar wrecked,
And the true and brave laid low
By the iron hand of a bigot hate,
In the days of a nation's woe.

In those grey old ruins of our native land
There are memories sad and proud;
They tell of the patriot's noble fight,
And they speak of the martyr's shroud.
Oh, guard them more from careless hands
Than you would from the winter blast;
They were left to the children of Patrick's race
To tell of a glorious past.

IN LOVING MEMORY

(A Dear Friend.)

ALOFTY, noble heart is stilled for ever,
A kindly, gentle voice has ceased to speak,
A soul that in God's service faltered never,
Has gone, the peace of God's bright Home to seek.

Brave, warm heart, so true, so pure, so loving,
I knew thy generous love and felt its glow;
A guiding light before me always moving
Is quenched for ever now—God wills it so.

Dear friend, to whom I gave a child's affection,
And whom the years made dearer still to me,
Whene'er I sought a symbol of perfection,
My thoughts at once would wander back to thee.

The tears will fall, tho' it is vain to weep thee;
One called thee Home to Him—and He knows best;
No bond of human love on earth could keep thee—
Great soul, dear friend, true guide, God give thee rest.

THE SILENT SHRINE *(Glendalough)*

I LOOK far back, a long, long gaze,
O'er the mountain of faded years,
O'er the anguish streams and the bloodstained ways
That are crowded with hallowed biers;
And I see in the heart of a lonely glen
A form like a quenchless star,
Whose eyes are turned from the homes of men
To the Home where the angels are.

A kingly son of a kingly line,
Who fled from the banquet hall,
From the feast of song and the sparkling wine
And the beauty of home—and all;
To that dreamy glen, from the world apart,
Untrodden, unsought, unknown,
Where the rich, pure gold of his noble heart
Might be polished for God alone.

When he knelt by the lakeside, still and calm,
With his hands outstretched in prayer,
Little birds swooped down on each tender palm
And nestled, unheeded, there.
And away thro' the world they carried his name,
Till, oft at the day's decline,
Weary and travel-stained, pilgrims came
To rest by the Silent Shrine.

And when they had rested, they paused awhile,
Unwilling to turn away,
And Kevin gave them the welcome smile,
And murmured to each one, "Stay."
And soon on the mountain and over the vale
Rose the church and the tiny cell,
While borne afar on the restless gale
Was the sound of the vesper bell.

'Tis lonely now, for the spoiler's hand
Has wrecked it again and again;
But the hills are changeless, erect and grand,
(To sweep *them* away were vain).
And they tell, as they stand in their silent pride,
More plainly than mortal tongue,
Of Eire's hopes, that have never died,
And her Faith that is ever young.

A HOPE SONG

CHEER up! young hearts do not easily perish;
Crushed they may be in the bondage of pain;
Hope never-fading, and memories they cherish,
Will banish their sorrows and raise them again.

Dreams may be shattered, and ties may be broken,
Friends may prove false, and affection may die,
Cold bitter words may be thoughtlessly spoken,
Poor wounded spirits in anguish may cry.

Still, do not pine 'neath your burden of sadness;
Waste not your tears while your songs are unsung;
Seek through the gloom for the sunlight of gladness—
Joy cannot die in the hearts that are young.

A LAMENT

YOU have gone with the rest of the throng,
A chara mo chroidhe,
And the strains of a poor, simple song
I will waken for thee;
You have travelled to God's holy strand,
And here in the silence I stand,
And I wait for the clasp of your hand,
A chara mo chroidhe.

I will watch for you all thro' the day,
A chara mo chroidhe.
I will think of the words that you'd say
So kindly to me;
And your soft "Bail o Dhia ort" shall lie
On my soul like a child's tender sigh,
Only dying when I, too, shall die,
A chara mo chroidhe.

Your mind was a treasure-filled store,
A chara mo chroidhe,
Of Banba's beautiful lore
When her people were free;
And you wept for the day, long ago,
When the sons who should guard her from woe
Tore the shield from her breast for the foe,
A chara mo chroidhe.

You were true to your Maker above,
A chara mo chroidhe,
And true to the land of your love—
No truer had she.
His Name was your hope and your guide;
Her name was your joy and your pride,
And they lived in your heart side by side,
A chara mo chroidhe.

You were weary and needed a sleep,
A chara mo chroidhe.
Your pathway was rugged and steep
To Eternity's sea—
You were tired of earth and its glare.
May your rest be with God, is my prayer,
And the love of the angels your share,
A chara mo chroidhe.

IF I WERE A POET

IF I were blest with the gift of song,
I'd sing like the birds in the leafy grove;
I'd call together the weak and strong,
And bind them all in a bond of love.

I'd sing my songs in the crowded ways,
'Till the toiler's heart would leap with joy;
'Till his thoughts would fly to the olden days
When he roamed the mountains a careless boy.

The sad and the weary my songs would find,
And, like sunbeams flashing across the streams,
They'd chase the shadows from many a mind,
And bring back tender, unclouded dreams.

I'd sing of the flowers on plain and hill;
Of bird and blossom, of wind and wave,
And the hearts of men with songs I'd thrill
Of praise to God for the gifts He gave.

I dream, and I dream, the whole day long;
My dreams are like echoes of far-off chimes;
But I sigh in vain for the gift of song—
I am only a weaver of idle rhymes.

ON WINGS OF LOVE

I AM sending wishes on wings of love
To fly through the Irish land,
To be gently borne, like treasure-trove,
To many a far-off strand.
Ah, me! it is easy to name them all,
And hard to make them real;
But they go from my heart, and where'er they call
May never a shadow steal!

There are some for you 'mong the Ulster hills,
Where the songs of hope are sung;
There are some for you by the Munster rills,
Where love is forever young;
There are some for you in your Leinster homes,
And for you in the dreamy West,
Where the thundering wild Atlantic foams
Ere it glides to Connacht's breast.

For you in exile beyond the seas
There are some—the warmest yet,
O, haste with them, haste with them, whispering breeze,
To tell that we don't forget,
To tell that we watch for the golden time
When the wandering ones shall come
O'er the pulsing waves from every clime
To the hearth of their island home.

Laughter and joy to you, love and peace
Extending beyond a day.
(God give you of all an unbroken lease
When you tread the eternal way!)
. . . . .

Away with your burden, O wings of the wind!
May care from your pathway flee;
You will cheer some heart, and mayhap you'll find
A kindly wish for me.

When the Day is Done

BEYOND the rim of the distant hills the sun has sunk down into a bed of gold. The long, sultry summer day is drawing to a close; the night will be with us soon. The least suspicion of a mist is beginning to steal across Glen na Mona—slowly, softly creeping along as if trying to come upon the meadows and the heather and the patches of green corn unawares and to clasp them tenderly in its fond embrace. There is not even the lightest breeze, the day is slipping away without a single sigh.

Here at the edge of the wood, on the mossy bank under the pine-trees, in the very heart of the Glen, we can hear and see everything in peace. We can hear the swish of a scythe coming up from the river direction, where someone is working late, and along with it the sweet, low murmuring of the river itself as it passes along timidly, singing its weird, eternal rune. We can hear the birds all round the Glen piping their farewell song to the departing day, and we notice that their voices have become soft and subdued. We can hear a woman singing her baby to sleep with a sweet, old, crooning song that floats across to us through the gathering mist, and seems to have come to us down through the dim, dead years from a far-off, happy time that we have known. Through the open door of a house on the hillside above the Glen comes the merry lilt of a fiddle, and on the threshold-

stone of another house, a gossoon is keeping time to the music with nimble feet and lilting the tune himself at the same time. From nearly a score of tiny houses we can see the blue smoke ascending lazily and gracefully in thin, straight columns—going up like incense from the grateful earth to the cloudless skies above. The scent of that turf-smoke and the fragrance of the newly-mown hay and of the purple heather and of hawthorn and woodbine in the hedges mingle together in a sweet perfume that floats about us and brings into our tired hearts a sense of soothing and of rest.

Oh! dreams that are dreamed at such a time as this, what joy and sorrow do ye not bring! Dreams that exalt our minds and our hearts, that inspire us to do noble deeds, that blot out the falsehood of the world and heal the wounds of blighted hopes and shattered ideals; dreams of a golden future day when Roisin Dubh *shall rule and reign, a radiant Queen once more; dreams of joys that may never be ours; dreams centering around hopes that may never be fulfilled; dreams that to you and to me are dearer than all the gilded dross of earth, than all the false allurements of fortune and of fame. O, beautiful dreams of the gloaming, ye are the kind and gentle messengers of the Eternal God of Peace!*

. . . .

The night has fallen in the Glen. The mist has grown into a thick, white, fleecy mantle that covers the houses and the hill, and the heather and everything—even the smoke-wreaths are no longer to be seen. The shadows are closing in upon the broad, brown bog. The birds have ceased to sing and are nestling close together in their cosy beds. There is no sound to be heard in the air, or

on the earth, save only the dreamy, lonesome call of a corncrake in the upland meadows far away. The stars have come out and are peeping down upon the silent world. The night has fallen in the Glen.

. . . .

Dear God! when the day Thou hast decreed for us draws to a close, when the sun has faded from the sky, when the shadows and the mist begin to creep over the Valley of our exile, and our dim eyes can look no more upon Thy fair earth; dear God! in that hour may the peace that is Thine alone to give and to take be in our souls, may the lights of Thy Mercy and Love lead us to Thee—even as the silence and the stars have drawn us near to Thee this evening in the dreamy heart of Glen na Mona.

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